

Exegetische Beobachtungen zu den David-Jonathan-Geschichten

I. Das Problem

Biblischen Texten, die sich — vermeintlich oder tatsächlich — auf das Thema "Homosexualität" beziehen lassen, ist in den letzten Jahren erhöhte Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt worden. Ohne Zweifel hängt diese Aufmerksamkeit mit der prominenten Stellung des Themas zusammen, die ihm in der innerkirchlichen und gesamtgesellschaftlichen Diskussion zukommt.

Die David-Jonathan-Geschichten stellen unter den erwähnten Texten insofern eine Besonderheit dar, als ihr Bezug zum Thema "Homosexualität" durchaus umstritten ist. Zu denjenigen, die in neuerer Zeit innerhalb des deutschen Sprachraums das Vorhandensein eines solchen Bezuges vielleicht am pointiertesten behauptet haben, gehören S. Schroer und T. Staubli. In ihrem Beitrag "Saul, David und Jonathan — eine Dreiecksgeschichte?"⁽¹⁾ versuchen sie darzulegen, dass es sich bei der Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David um eine homosexuelle Beziehung handle⁽²⁾. Begründet wird diese Deutung der Beschreibung der Beziehung zwischen den beiden Männern insbesondere mit den folgenden Hinweisen:

- In 1 Sam 18,1-3 findet sich die Bemerkung, dass Jonathan die Davids lieb gewann wie seine eigene נפש (ויאדברו ידונתן כנפש). Die hier verwendeten Formulierungen sind auffällig parallel zu denjenigen, mit denen in Hld 1,7 und 3,1-4 die Zuneigung der Frau zu ihrem Geliebten beschrieben wird.

- In 1 Sam 19,1 findet sich im Blick auf die Zuneigung Jonathans zu David die Wendung חפץ ב (״Gefallen finden an״): וידונתן בן-שאול חפץ ברוד מואד. In anderen Zusammenhängen (Gen 34,19; Dtn 21,14) bezieht sich diese Wendung auf das mit sexuellen Konnotationen verbundene Begehren des Mannes gegenüber der Frau.

⁽¹⁾ *Bibel und Kirche* 51 (1996) 15-22.

⁽²⁾ Neben T. Horner deutet auch D.M. GUNN, *The Fate of King Saul* (JSOTSS 14; Sheffield 1980) 93 die Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David als ein — allerdings einseitiges — homosexuelles Verhältnis.

- In 1 Sam 20,11 fordert Jonathan David auf, aufs Feld hinauszugehen; die Formulierung, die hier verwendet wird (לכה ונצא השדה), findet sich fast wörtlich in Hld 7,12 im Zusammenhang einer entsprechenden Aufforderung der Frau an ihren Geliebten wieder.

- In 1 Sam 20,41 heisst es, dass Jonathan und David sich küssten (וישקו איש את-רעהו).

- In 1 Sam 20,17.42 finden sich Hinweise auf das Schwören; vom Schwören ist aber ebenfalls in Hld 2,7 und 8,4 die Rede.

- In 2 Sam 1,26 schliesslich ist nicht nur die Aussage überliefert, dass Jonathans Liebe für David “wunderbarer” war als Frauenliebe, sondern auch, dass Jonathan ihm sehr “hold” war (נעמת לי מאד).

Wiederum bestehen Parallelen zu Hld: In Hld 1,16 und 7,7 begegnet die Wurzel נעם, bezogen im ersten Fall auf den Geliebten und im zweiten auf die Geliebte.

Sind die von S. Schroer und T. Staubli gesammelten Hinweise tatsächlich stark genug, um die Vermutung, dass es sich bei der Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David um eine homosexuelle Beziehung handelt, bestätigen zu können — eine Vermutung, die sich gegen einen jahrtausendelangen exegetischen Konsens wendet? Beantworten lässt sich diese Frage nur, indem die genannten Argumente einzeln untersucht werden und indem geprüft wird, ob weitere, von S. Schroer und T. Staubli nicht genannte exegetische Beobachtungen zur Klärung des Verständnisses der im Blickfeld stehenden Texte beitragen können⁽³⁾.

II. Die semantische Ebene

Zu den von S. Schroer und T. Staubli aufgelisteten Argumenten lässt sich folgendes sagen:

a) In 1 Sam 18,3 und 20,17 sowie in 2 Sam 1,26 ist von der אהבה (“Liebe”) Jonathans zu David die Rede; dieselbe Wurzel begegnet als Verb אהב (“lieben”) in 1 Sam 18,1 und 20,17. Zum Substantiv אהבה ist folgendes festzuhalten: אהבה begegnet insgesamt 53mal im Alten Testament, davon 11mal im Hohenlied. Ausserhalb des Hohenliedes liegt das Schwergewicht der Verwendung in der

⁽³⁾ Bei den nachfolgend angeführten Beobachtungen geht es allein um die literarische Ebene der David-Jonathan-Geschichten, nicht um die Frage, inwieweit die in ihnen geschilderten Ereignisse historische Realität spiegeln.

Bezeichnung des Verhältnisses JHWH-Israel⁽⁴⁾. Als Bezeichnung für eine intime zwischenmenschliche Beziehung wird das Substantiv ausserhalb des Hohenliedes nur an drei Stellen gebraucht⁽⁵⁾. An keiner der 14 Stellen, an denen אהבה auf eine intime Beziehung referiert, steht eine homosexuelle Beziehung im Blick. Dass dort, wo אהבה auf eine zwischenmenschliche Beziehung referiert, die Komponente der Intimität durchaus abwesend sein kann, zeigen die Belege in 2 Sam 19,7; 1 Kön 11,2 und Ps 109,4.5. Die Verwendung von אהבה allein kann also die Implikation einer sexuellen oder gar einer homosexuellen Bedeutungskomponente nicht wahrscheinlich machen. Im Gegenteil legt die Häufigkeit der Beziehung der אהבה auf das Verhältnis JHWH-Volk die Frage nahe, ob die dreifache Verwendung des Substantivs im Zusammenhang der Beziehung Jonathans zu David die אהבה Jonathans nicht im weitesten Sinne als eine Art Abbild zur Liebe des Volkes zu JHWH bzw. JHWHs zu seinem Volk oder als Auswirkung der Liebe JHWHs⁽⁶⁾ oder als ihr Werkzeug zu verstehen sein könnte, ob also der Liebe Jonathans über die bloss zwischenmenschliche Dimension hinaus eine theologische Dimension eignet. Falls diese Frage im positiven Sinne zu beantworten sein sollte, wäre die Annahme, dass hier eine Anspielung auf eine homosexuelle Beziehung vorliegt, noch zusätzlich erschwert, da eine explizite theologische Bejahung der Homosexualität sich im Alten Testament nicht findet, sondern — im Gegenteil — die Rede von der אהבה zwischen JHWH und dem Volk auf den Bund verweist, zu dessen Satzungen der Schutz der Ehe als des einzigen möglichen Ortes intimer Beziehungen grundlegend gehört⁽⁷⁾. Im Blick auf die Formulierung in 2 Sam 1,26, wonach die אהבה Jonathans für David “wunderbarer” gewesen sei als die אהבת נשים, ist zu bemerken, dass es sich hier um poetische Redeweise handelt. Der Vergleich zwischen den beiden Arten der אהבה muss also nicht im wörtlichen, womöglich gar erotischen, Sinn gemeint sein, sondern es ist durchaus mit dichterischer Übertreibung oder

⁽⁴⁾ 22 Belege sind dieser Gruppe zuzuordnen. Dabei beschreibt אהבה gleich häufig die Haltung JHWHs zum Volk wie diejenige des Volkes zu JHWH.

⁽⁵⁾ Gen 29,20; 2 Sam 13,15; Spr 5,19.

⁽⁶⁾ Vgl. dazu die Bemerkung H.J. STOBES, *Das erste Buch Samuelis* (KAT; Gütersloh 1973) zu 1 Sam 18,1-4, wonach mit der Wurzel אהב hier mehr gemeint sei als eine bloss Freundschaft, nämlich “die durch den Segen Jahwes gewirkte persönliche Anziehungskraft Davids”.

⁽⁷⁾ Der Zusammenhang zwischen אהבה und Bund bzw. Bundessatzungen wird insbesondere im Dtn greifbar.

Ausschmückung zu rechnen⁽⁸⁾. Zudem kann nicht grundsätzlich ausgeschlossen werden, dass die *אהבה נשים* nicht etwa auch die Liebe der Mutter zu ihren Kindern meint⁽⁹⁾. Wenn aber mit dem Terminus *אהבה נשים* auch auf diese Art von Liebe referiert wird, ist die Annahme des Vorhandenseins einer erotischen Komponente in diesem Ausdruck nicht zwingend; um so weniger besteht dann noch Anlass, die damit in eine Komparationsrelation gesetzte *אהבה* zwischen David und Jonathan in einem erotischen Sinn zu verstehen.

b) Auch in bezug auf das Verb *אהב* ist der Befund komplexer, als es ein auf die Belege in 1 Sam 18,1 und 20,17 begrenzter Augenschein erwarten lässt. Im ganzen Alten Testament lässt sich *אהבה* 141mal belegen. Von diesen 141 Belegen entfallen 81 auf Beziehungen zwischen Mensch und Gott oder zwischen Mensch und Mensch, wobei die zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen mit 54 Belegen überwiegen. Von diesen 54 wiederum referieren 30 auf Beziehungen, bei denen eine sexuelle Komponente impliziert ist oder wenigstens nicht ausgeschlossen werden kann⁽¹⁰⁾. Zu vermerken ist, dass es sich bei allen diesen Belegen⁽¹¹⁾ um Belege handelt, die auf Beziehungen zwischen einem Mann und einer Frau, nie zwischen Personen des gleichen Geschlechts, Bezug nehmen. Rein quantitativ ist also die Erwartung, dass mit *אהב* in 1 Sam 18,1 und 20,17 eine die sexuelle Komponente einschliessende Beziehung gemeint sein kann, ohne weiteres möglich, aber keineswegs zwingend; dagegen lässt die Beobachtung, dass an all den Stellen, an denen *אהב* eine sexuelle Komponente einschliesst oder einschliessen kann, nur Mann-Frau-Beziehungen im Blick stehen, die Erwartung, dass auch

⁽⁸⁾ Vgl. A.A. ANDERSON, *2 Samuel* (WBC; Dallas 1989) und H.J. STOEBE, *Das zweite Buch Samuelis* (KAT; Gütersloh 1994). Dass der Vers als "Lobpreis" der gleichgeschlechtlichen Liebe verstanden werden könnte, wird von H.J. STOEBE ausdrücklich zurückgewiesen. Ebenso bemerkt F. STOLZ, *Das erste und zweite Buch Samuel* (ZBK; Zürich 1981) zur Stelle, dass der Text "nicht im Sinne von Homosexualität verstanden werden" darf; sondern es gehe "um die Zuneigung von Freunden, die das erste Mannesalter miteinander erlebt haben".

⁽⁹⁾ So ANDERSON, *2 Samuel*, zur Stelle.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Allenfalls wären auch Stellen wie Jes 57,8 und Ez 16,37 dieser Gruppe zuzuordnen, bei denen auf die Fremdgötterverehrung mittels der Metapher sexueller Beziehungen Bezug genommen wird.

⁽¹¹⁾ Es handelt sich dabei um folgende Stellen: Gen 24,67; 29,18.30.32; 34,3; Dtn 21,15 (zweimal).16; Ri 14,16; 16,4.15; 1 Sam 1,5; 18,20.28; 2 Sam 13,1.4.15; 1 Kön 11,1; Hos 3,1 (zweimal); Koh 9,9; Est 2,17; 2 Chr 11,21. Hinzu kommen sieben Belege im Hohenlied.

in 1 Sam 18,1 und 20,17 eine sexuelle Komponente impliziert sein könnte, als sehr unwahrscheinlich erscheinen⁽¹²⁾. Eine weitere Beobachtung kommt hinzu: Im näheren literarischen Umfeld der Belege 1 Sam 18,1 und 20,17 wird das Verb אהב in Zusammenhängen verwendet, die eine erotische Implikation ausschliessen: In 1 Sam 16,21 ist das Subjekt des auf David gerichteten "Liebens" Saul, in 1 Sam 18,16 ist es "ganz Israel und Juda". Die zuletzt genannte Stelle ist von besonderem Interesse, weil sie nicht nur die erotische Dimension ausschliesst, sondern deutlich eine politische Dimension einschliesst. Es scheint, dass eine solche Dimension — zusätzlich zur emotionalen — auch in der Verwendung von אהב mit Bezug auf das Verhältnis Jonathans zu David vorliegt, wobei es konkret darum geht, dass Jonathan die Thronanwartschaft Davids unterstützt. Dass dies der Fall ist, wird an mehreren Stellen explizit hervorgehoben: 1 Sam 18,4 (Übergabe königlicher Insignien)⁽¹³⁾; 20,13 (Parallelisierung des Mitseins JHWHs mit Saul einerseits und David andererseits); 23,17 ("du wirst König werden über Israel, und ich werde der zweite nach dir sein")⁽¹⁴⁾. Diese Beobachtungen legen es nahe, in der Deutung von אהב einerseits jede sexuelle Komponente auszuschliessen und andererseits das Element der politischen Unterstützung Davids durch Jonathan einzuschliessen. Unterstützt wird diese Deutung durch die Struktur des Satzes 1 Sam 18,1; denn strukturell steht אהב in Parallele zu קשר, einem Verb, das dort, wo es zur Beschreibung menschlicher Beziehungen verwendet wird, in der Regel im politischen Sinn verwendet wird⁽¹⁵⁾. In dieselbe Richtung weist schliesslich die Verwendung des Nomens אהב ("Freund") im literarischen Umfeld der David-Jonathan-Geschichte. אהב begegnet zum einen in 2 Sam 19,7 und zum andern in 1 Kön 5,15. In 2 Sam 19,7 wird David von Joab vorgeworfen, dass er die hasst, die ihn lieben (אהביך). Aus dem Kontext ist deutlich, dass diese "Liebe", auf die hier mit אהב referiert wird, im politischen Sinn zu verstehen ist, als treue Gefolgschaft der Untergebenen gegenüber

⁽¹²⁾ Ein Hinweis auf Rut 4,15 kann an diesem Befund nichts ändern, da die Postulierung einer homoerotischen Beziehung zwischen Ruth und Noëmi, wie sie gelegentlich vorgenommen wird, sich auf keineswegs eindeutige exegetische Beobachtungen stützen kann, als dies im Fall des Verhältnisses zwischen David und Jonathan der Fall ist.

⁽¹³⁾ Vgl. zu dieser Deutung die Bemerkungen unter III.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Vgl. zu dieser Deutung den Einwand H.J. Stobbes unter III.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Genauere Hinweise folgen unten.

dem König. In 1 Kön 5,15 bezieht sich אָהַב auf das Verhältnis Hiram zu David. Auch hier ist deutlich, dass die "Liebe", auf die mit אָהַב hingewiesen wird, im politischen Sinn zu verstehen ist, in diesem Fall als Bundestreue zwischen den Regenten zweier benachbarter Staaten⁽¹⁶⁾. Nun bleibt allerdings der Hinweis von S. Schroer und T. Staubli, dass die in 1 Sam 18,1 sich findende Formulierung וַיֵּאָהֶב יְהוֹנָתָן כְּנַפְשׁוֹ parallel zu Formulierungen in Hld 1,7 und 3,1-4 sei. Eine genauere Analyse ergibt, dass die Parallelität sich auf die syntagmatische Verbindung von אָהַב und נַפֶּשׁ beschränkt, dass dagegen die syntaktische Beziehung der beiden Wörter stark differiert. In 1 Sam 18,1 (und ähnlich V. 3) wird נַפֶּשׁ durch die Präposition Kaph mit אָהַב verbunden; נַפֶּשׁ fungiert hier grammatikalisch als Element einer syntaktisch fakultativen Umstandsbeschreibung in der Form einer Komparationsbestimmung. In Hld 1,7 und 3,1-4 dagegen fungiert נַפֶּשׁ als Subjekt zu אָהַב. Weiter sind die Formulierungen u.a. darin unterschieden, dass in 1 Sam 18,1 נַפֶּשׁ mit dem Suffix der dritten Person Singular, in Hld 1,7 und 3,1-4 mit dem Suffix der ersten Person Singular versehen ist. So bleibt als Parallele der Formulierung nur der Umstand der syntagmatischen Nähe des Verbs אָהַב und des Nomens נַפֶּשׁ; eine solche Beziehung findet sich aber auch in Ps 11,5 (נַפֶּשׁ als Subjekt, אָהַב als Element des direkten Objekts) und Spr 19,8 (נַפֶּשׁ als Objekt zu אָהַב). Da die Formulierungen in 1 Sam 18,1(3) einerseits und Hld 1,7 und 3,1-4 andererseits nur in wenigen Aspekten parallel sind und da diese Aspekte auch an anderen Stellen auftauchen, sind sie nicht als zwingender Beleg für eine direkte Abhängigkeit der Samuelstelle(n) von den Vergleichstexten im Hohenlied zu benutzen. Wichtig ist ferner, dass sich Parallelen in der Formulierung nicht nur zwischen 1 Sam 18,1(3) und den erwähnten Stellen finden lassen, sondern auch zwischen 1 Sam 18,1(3) und Lev 19,18: In beiden Fällen wird אָהַב mit der Präposition Kaph verbunden, die in beiden Fällen die Komparationsangabe einleitet (den x lieben wie [כ] den y). Parallel ist auch, dass diese Komparationsangabe auf das Subjekt des Liebens zurückverweist; der Unterschied liegt nur darin, dass im einen Fall

⁽¹⁶⁾ Vgl. zur Verwendung der Wurzel אָהַב in 1 Kön 15,5 J.A. THOMPSON, "The Significance of the Verb *Love* in the David-Jonathan Narratives in 1 Samuel", VT 24 (1974) 334, 338. J.A. THOMPSON weist — mit Berufung auf W.L. MORAN — darauf hin, dass die politische Konnotation der Wurzel אָהַב in altorientalischen Texten, insbesondere im Akkadischen, breit belegt ist ("The Significance of the Verb *Love*" 334, 338).

das Subjekt mit נפש, im anderen bloss mit dem Personalsuffix angezeigt wird. Damit ist aber deutlich, dass sachlich Lev 19,18 und 1 Sam 18,1(3) eng aufeinander bezogen sind; die unterschiedlichen Formulierungen können dagegen als stilistische Varianten gelten. Die Beziehung zwischen Lev 19,18 und 1 Sam 18,1(3) macht eine die erotische Komponente inkludierende Interpretation von אהב in 1 Sam 18 zusätzlich unwahrscheinlich. Von Gewicht ist hier auch der Umstand, dass in einem Vertrag Asarhaddons die Vasallen Assurbanipals aufgefordert werden, ihn zu lieben wie sich selber⁽¹⁷⁾. Diese Parallele weist die Formulierung in 1 Sam 18,1(3) wiederum dem politischen Bereich zu⁽¹⁸⁾.

c) Zu der in 1 Sam 19,1 belegten Wurzel הפך ist folgendes zu bemerken: Das Verb הפך "Gefallen haben" ist im Alten Testament 71mal belegt, das Adjektiv הפך "Gefallen habend" 12mal und das Substantiv הפך "Gefallen; Wunsch; Ziel; Vorhaben; Sache" 38mal; das ergibt ein Total von 121 Belegen der Wurzel הפך. Kein einziger der Belege von הפך und הפך weist eine dem erotischen Bereich zugehörige Konnotation auf. Beim Verb sind es von den 71 genau sechs Belege, die auf einen erotischen Bedeutungsaspekt der Wurzel hinweisen; von diesen sechs finden sich drei im Hohenlied⁽¹⁹⁾. Statistisch gesehen ist also die Wahrscheinlichkeit, bei der Wurzel הפך mit einer erotischen Konnotation rechnen zu müssen, gering. Hinzu kommt, dass an allen Stellen, an denen zweifelsfrei auf eine erotische Komponente zu schliessen ist, es immer um Mann-Frau-Beziehungen geht. Schliesslich ist darauf hinzuweisen, dass das Verb הפך in Zusammenhängen verwendet wird, die zum Verständnis der Verwendung in 1 Sam 19,1 beitragen können: In unmittelbarer

⁽¹⁷⁾ "You shall love Assurbanipal, the great crown prince designate, son of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, your lord, like yourselves" (S. PARPOLA - K. WATANABE, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths* [State Archives of Assyria II; Helsinki 1988] 6:266-268) — Vom "Lieben" (*raʾamu*) ist im Zusammenhang mit assyrischen Vasallenverträgen wiederholt die Rede: Siehe S. PARPOLA - K. WATANABE, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties* 6:207 (Asarhaddon); 9:32 (Assurbanipal).

⁽¹⁸⁾ Zur Art der mit אהב bezeichneten Beziehung Jonathans zu David bemerkt J.C. EXUM, *Tragedy and Biblical Narrative* [Cambridge 1992] 73, zutreffend: "This 'love' is not eros but male bonding".

⁽¹⁹⁾ Folgende Belege fallen in diese Kategorie: Gen 34,19; Dtn 21,14; Hld 2,7; 3,5; 8,4; Est 2,14. Allenfalls könnten in diesem Zusammenhang auch diejenigen Stellen genannt werden, in denen es um das Eingehen der Leviratehe geht (Dtn 25,7.8; Rut 3,13).

Nachbarschaft zum Beleg in 1 Sam 19,1 wird das Verb $\gamma\text{פח}$ mit Bezug auf die Beziehung von Saul gegenüber David gebraucht (1 Sam 18,22). Da diese Beziehung generell kaum als homosexuelle Liebesbeziehung gewertet werden kann und da der Umstand, dass die Beziehung Sauls zu David von Saul quasi “öffentlich”, nämlich gegenüber seinen Dienern, mit der Wurzel $\gamma\text{פח}$ umschrieben wird, es vollends unmöglich macht, dass hier ein Hinweis auf eine homosexuelle Beziehung herausgelesen werden kann⁽²⁰⁾, ist nicht damit zu rechnen, dass der nur einige Verse später folgende nächste Beleg des Verbs plötzlich eine ganz andere semantische Qualität haben und als Hinweis auf eine homosexuelle Beziehung interpretiert werden sollte. Weiter fällt auf, dass ebenfalls in einer relativen Nähe zu 1 Sam 19,1 eine Verwendung des Verbs $\gamma\text{פח}$ auftaucht, die eine deutlich politische Konnotation aufweist: In 2 Sam 20,11 wird mit $\gamma\text{פח}$ die politische bzw. militärische Gefolgschaft gegenüber Joab und damit auch gegenüber David ausgedrückt. Es erscheint keineswegs unmöglich, dass eine solche auf den politischen Bereich bezogene Bedeutungskomponente auch im “Gefallen” Jonathans an David mitschwingt. Das würde zur übrigen Darstellung der Beziehung zwischen David und Jonathan gut passen; denn die Episode, die in 1 Sam 20,13-17 überliefert wird, lässt sich nicht anders denn als Verzicht Jonathans auf eigene Thronpräntionen und auf die Unterstützung des Thronanspruches Davids verstehen. Schliesslich drängt sich noch eine letzte Beobachtung im Zusammenhang mit dem Verb $\gamma\text{פח}$ auf⁽²¹⁾: Im Kontext der David- und Salomogeschichten ist an mehreren Stellen davon die Rede, dass JHWH an David und Salomo “Gefallen hatte” ($\gamma\text{פח}$)⁽²²⁾. Vor diesem Hintergrund ist zu erwägen, inwiefern das “Gefallen” Jonathans an David mit dem “Gefallen” JHWHs an David zusammenhängt. Soll das “Gefallen” Jonathans als Auswirkung des “Gefallens” JHWHs auf der

⁽²⁰⁾ Vorausgesetzt wird hier, dass auch dann, wenn mit heimlichen homosexuellen Beziehungen zu rechnen wäre, ein öffentliches Bekenntnis zu einer solchen Beziehung im antiken Israel — genauso wie im späteren Judentum — nicht möglich war. Diese Voraussetzung erscheint dadurch gerechtfertigt, dass in der Antike bisher kein Zeugnis bekannt wäre, das als Beleg für ein Abweichen von dieser Regel gelten könnte.

⁽²¹⁾ Nicht ohne Bedeutung ist, dass die erwähnten Stellen (mit Ausnahme der auf Salomo bezogenen) in literarischen Schichten enthalten sind, die dem Beleg in 1 Sam 19,1 nahestehen.

⁽²²⁾ David: 2 Sam 15,26; 22,20 (= Ps 18,20); Salomo: 1 Kön 10,9; 2 Chr 9,8.

menschlichen Ebene verstanden werden? Vielleicht darf der angedeutete Zusammenhang noch konkreter verstanden werden: Das "Gefallen" JHWHs an David wirkt sich im politischen Erfolg Davids aus; das "Gefallen" Jonathans an David ist ein Mittel, mit dem JHWHs "Gefallen" zum Ziel kommt. Damit ist impliziert, dass das "Gefallen" Jonathans an David dem Willen JHWHs entspricht, ja letztlich auf JHWH selber zurückzuführen ist. Denkbar wäre auch, das "Gefallen" Jonathans als Entsprechung zum göttlichen "Gefallen" zu verstehen: Davids Weg wird dadurch geebnet, dass ihm sowohl von göttlicher als auch von menschlicher Seite die nötige Unterstützung zuteil wird, womit der im Namen Davids enthaltene Hinweis auf seine "Geliebt-heit" konkret bestätigt wird⁽²³⁾. Wie man den Zusammenhang zwischen dem "Gefallen" JHWHs und dem "Gefallen" Jonathans auch genauer aufzufassen hat, deutlich ist, dass der Konnex eine Deutung von חַפֵּץ in 1 Sam 19,1 als Hinweis auf eine homosexuelle Beziehung unwahrscheinlich macht; denn dafür, dass im Rahmen des Alten Testaments JHWH selber eine günstige Bewertung solcher Beziehungen direkt zugeschrieben werden kann, fehlt jeder positive Hinweis.

d) Was die Formulierung in 1 Sam 20,11ab angeht (לכה ונצא), so ist zuzugeben, daß sich die engste Parallele in Hld 7,12 findet. Es stellt sich aber die Frage, wieviel Gewicht der Verbindung dreier Wörter zuzumessen ist, die zum einen als Allerweltswörter anzusehen sind und die zum andern einen Vorgang beschreiben, der nicht anders denn als alltäglich beschrieben werden kann. Auch wenn im ganzen Alten Testament die Verbindung לכה ונצא (bzw. ohne *waw*, dafür mit Einschub von דודי zwischen נצא und לכה in Hld 7,12) nur zweimal auftaucht, ist doch damit zu rechnen, dass der mit ihr beschriebene Vorgang unzählige Male vorkam und dass in der Alltagssprache eine mit der erwähnten Formulierung identische oder ihr sehr nahekommende geläufig gewesen sein muss. Beachtung verdient in diesem Zusammenhang, dass sich im Alten Testament nicht weniger als 19 Stellen nachweisen lassen, an denen שדה wie in 1 Sam 20,11 und Hld 7,12 mit נצא oder הלך syntagmatisch verbunden ist⁽²⁴⁾. Weiter ist zu berücksichtigen, dass das Motiv des

⁽²³⁾ Zum möglichen Zusammenhang zwischen dem Namen "David" und dem Appellativum "Liebling" vgl. J.J. STAMM, *Beiträge zur hebräischen und altorientalischen Namenskunde* (OBO 30; Freiburg-Göttingen 1980) 25-43.

⁽²⁴⁾ Verbindung mit הלך: Gen 24,65; 27,5; 30,14; Num 22,23; Rut 2,8; wahrscheinlich ist, dass auch in Gen 4,8 der offensichtlich unvollständige Text

“Feldes” bereits in 1 Sam 19,3 vorliegt und also das Vorkommen von שדה in 1 Sam 20 als Wiederaufnahme dieses Motivs gedeutet werden kann. Zu fragen wäre auch, ob das Motiv des “Feldes” nicht einfach von der Sache her gefordert ist, weil das “Feld” einen Ort der Verborgenheit bezeichnet, der für die Beteiligten in der gegebenen Situation den einzig möglichen Rahmen bildet, an dem sie sich treffen können. Der Kontext der Erzählung legt jedenfalls die Annahme nahe, dass Jonathan und David diesen Ort nicht darum aufsuchen, weil sie sich ungestört ihrem Liebesverhältnis widmen wollen, sondern weil ein öffentliches Zusammentreffen aus politischen bzw. Sicherheitsgründen zu diesem Zeitpunkt nicht mehr möglich ist. Mit allen diesen Hinweisen soll die Möglichkeit, dass die Analogie in der Formulierung von 1 Sam 20,11 und Hld 7,12 auf eine textliche Abhängigkeit hinweisen könnte, keineswegs ausgeschlossen werden. Die Frage, welche Schlussfolgerungen aus einer solchen Abhängigkeit gezogen werden können, bedarf aber der besonderen Erörterung (s.u.). Dass eine mögliche textliche Abhängigkeit als unmittelbarer Hinweis darauf zu verstehen ist, dass die Beziehung zwischen David und Jonathan gleichermassen als erotisch zu beschreiben ist wie diejenigen zwischen der Frau und ihrem Geliebten im Hohenlied, liegt keineswegs so unmittelbar auf der Hand, wie das von S. Schroer und T. Staubli vorausgesetzt wird.

e) In bezug auf das Verb נשק “küssen”, das in 1 Sam 20,41 verwendet wird, ist zunächst festzuhalten, dass es im Hohenlied zwar belegt ist, aber nur zweimal⁽²⁵⁾; damit ist aber deutlich, dass sich durch die Verwendung des Verbs im Zusammenhang der David-Jonathan-Geschichte keine besondere Nähe zum Hohenlied ableiten lässt. Von den insgesamt 27 Belegen des Verbs, die von der Sache her relevant sind (qal und pi)⁽²⁶⁾, referieren nur drei auf Beziehungen, denen eindeutig eine erotische Komponente

des MT entsprechend der überwiegenden Mehrheit der alten Textzeugen mit הלך נלכה ergänzt werden muss, was eine sehr enge Analogie der Formulierung zu 1 Sam 20,11 ergibt. Verbindung mit יצא: Gen 27,3; Dtn 14,22; 28,38; Ri 9,27,42; 1 Sam 20,35; 2 Sam 11,23; 14,6 (hier ist ausdrücklich davon die Rede, dass zwei Personen allein miteinander auf das Feld hinausgehen); 18,6; 1 Kön 2,26; 2 Kön 4,39; Jer 6,25; 14,18; Mi 4,10. In 1 Kön 11,29 liegt insofern eine Berührung mit 1 Sam 20,11 und Hld 7,12 vor, als hier vom Aufenthalt zweier Personen allein auf einem Feld die Rede ist, allerdings ohne Verbindung mit יצא oder הלך.

⁽²⁵⁾ Hld 1,2 und 8,1.

⁽²⁶⁾ Der Beleg in Gen 41,40 muss ausser Betracht bleiben.

eignet⁽²⁷⁾. In allen drei Fällen handelt es sich dabei um Beziehungen zwischen einem Mann und einer Frau. In der überwältigenden Mehrzahl der Belege von קָשַׁב wird das Verb im Kontext der Beziehung zwischen nahen Verwandten verwendet, in dem jede sexuelle Konnotation ausgeschlossen ist⁽²⁸⁾. In der Regel gehören die Beteiligten dabei dem gleichen Geschlecht an. Damit lässt sich festhalten: Die grösste Gruppe von Belegen des Verbs קָשַׁב bezieht sich auf Fälle, in denen sich männliche Verwandte küssen, wobei die zwischen ihnen bestehende Verwandtschaftsbeziehung auch auf Heiraten zwischen den beteiligten Familien beruhen kann. Hinzu kommen diejenigen Fälle, in denen ebenfalls auf Küsse zwischen Männern referiert wird, die zwar nicht verwandt sind, bei denen aber der Kontext eindeutig klar macht, dass erotische Konnotationen auszuschliessen sind⁽²⁹⁾. Vor diesem Hintergrund muss es als die zunächstliegende Annahme angesehen werden, dass auch die Verwendung von קָשַׁב im Zusammenhang der Beziehung zwischen David und Jonathan keine erotischen Konnotationen mit sich führt, dies um so mehr, als es sich auch bei der Beziehung zwischen David und Jonathan um eine — durch die Heirat zwischen David und Michal zustande gekommene — verwandtschaftliche Beziehung handelt⁽³⁰⁾. Weiter ist auffällig, dass der literarisch mit 1 Sam 20,41 am engsten in Beziehung stehende Beleg von קָשַׁב in 1 Sam 10,1 eine politische Konnotation hat: Samuel küsst Saul in dem Moment, als er ihn im Auftrag JHWHs zum נֶגֶד über Israel salbt. Von daher stellt sich die Frage, inwieweit nicht auch beim Beleg in 1 Sam 20,41 mit einer solchen politischen Komponente zu rechnen ist, um so mehr als hier ebenfalls ein Vorgang der Einsetzung ins Königsamt im Hintergrund steht. Von besonderem Gewicht ist ferner der Umstand, dass sich kein

⁽²⁷⁾ Neben den beiden Belegen im Hohenlied handelt es sich um den Beleg in Spr 7,13.

⁽²⁸⁾ Die folgenden 15 Belege sind hier zu nennen: Gen 27,26.27 (Isaak–Jakob); 29,13 (Laban–Jakob); 31,28 und 32,1 (Laban–Enkel und Töchter); 33,4 (Esau–Jakob); 45,15 (Joseph–Brüder); 48,10 (Jakob–Söhne Josephs); 50,1 (Joseph–Jakob); Ex 4,17 (Aaron–Mose); 18,7 (Mose–Jethro); 2 Sam 14,33 (David–Absalom); 1 Kön 19,20 (Elisa–Eltern); Rut 1,9 (Noëmi–Schwiegertöchter); 1,14 (Noëmi–Orpa).

⁽²⁹⁾ 1 Sam 10,1 (Samuel–Saul); 2 Sam 15,5 (Absalom–“Bürger”); 19,40 (David–Barsillai); 20,9 (Joab–Amasa).

⁽³⁰⁾ Die Verwendung des Verbs קָשַׁב im Zusammenhang der David-Jonathan-Geschichte (1 Sam 20,41) folgt nach dem Bericht über die Heirat von David und Michal (1 Sam 18,27).

einzigster Beleg beibringen lässt, in dem שָׁק eindeutig als Element der Beschreibung einer homosexuellen Beziehung dient und also eine entsprechende Deutung von 1 Sam 20,41 untermauern könnte.

f) Als ausgesprochen überraschend muss der Hinweis auf das Verb שָׁבַע “schwören” gewertet werden, das nach S. Schroer und T. Staubli auf eine Beziehung zwischen den David-Jonathan-Geschichten und dem Hohenlied hindeuten soll. Bevor solche Beziehungen erwogen werden, müsste berücksichtigt werden, dass das Verb שָׁבַע über 180mal im Alten Testament belegt ist, davon fünfmal im Hohenlied. Das bedeutet, dass die Belege im Hohenlied weniger als 3% aller Belege von שָׁבַע ausmachen. Bei diesen Zahlenverhältnissen verbietet es sich, jedes Vorkommen von שָׁבַע als Hinweis auf eine Beziehung zum Hohenlied zu interpretieren. Zwar ist zuzugeben, dass die Zahlenverhältnisse anders aussehen, wenn die Stammform berücksichtigt wird: Die in 1 Sam 20,17 belegte Hif’il-Form des Verbs kommt auch in allen fünf Belegen im Hohenlied vor und ist insgesamt nur 29mal belegt. Dennoch verbieten sich auch von diesem Befund her vorschnelle Rückschlüsse, da zum einen die Formulierungen, in denen das Verb שָׁבַע im Hohenlied auftaucht, von der Formulierung in 1 Sam 20,17 stark abweichen und da zum anderen an den zwei weiteren Belegstellen des Verbs שָׁבַע innerhalb der David-Jonathan-Geschichten (1 Sam 20,3.42) nicht die Hif’il-Form, sondern die häufigere Nif’al-Form verwendet wird. Beachtung verdient weiter, dass in keinem der 26 Belege⁽³¹⁾ von שָׁבַע im literarischen Kontext der David-Jonathan-Geschichten — i.e. in den Samuel — und Königsbüchern — das Verb in einer Weise verwendet wird, die das Schwören als Bekräftigung eines Liebesverhältnisses verstehen liesse. Vielmehr geht es in der Regel beim Inhalt des Schwurs um Dinge, die dem politischen Bereich zugehören. Als grösste Einzelgruppe lassen sich diejenigen Schwüre nennen, bei denen es um die Zusage geht, dass das Leben eines bestimmten Menschen oder einer Menschengruppe im Zusammenhang mit politischen Umwälzungen nicht angetastet werden soll⁽³²⁾. Die zweitwichtigste

⁽³¹⁾ Die drei Belege innerhalb der David-Jonathan-Geschichten sind dabei nicht mitgezählt.

⁽³²⁾ Zu dieser Gruppe gehören die folgenden acht Belege: 1 Sam 19,6 (Zusage Sauls der Schonung Davids); 24,22f.; 30,15; 2 Sam 19,24; 21,2; 1 Kön 1,51; 2,8. Hinzu kommt ein Beleg, der die Nicht-Schonung des Lebens eines politischen Kontrahenten “zusichert” (1 Kön 2,23).

Gruppe sind diejenigen Schwüre, bei denen einer bestimmten Person das Thronfolgerecht zugesichert wird⁽³³⁾. Dieser in doppelter Hinsicht umschriebene Bezugshorizont bildet den Rahmen, innerhalb dessen die Schwüre in 1 Sam 20 eingebettet sind; und tatsächlich lässt sich feststellen, dass dieser doppelte politische Bezug auf die Vorgänge zwischen Jonathan und David in 1 Sam 20 ohne weiteres anwendbar ist. Dies um so mehr, als sowohl die Zusage der Verschonung des Lebens als auch die Zusage der Thronübernahme im literarischen Kontext der David-Jonathan-Geschichten mit explizitem Bezug auf David begegnen. Weiter ist dem Umstand Rechnung zu tragen, dass das Schwören zu den integralen Bestandteilen altorientalischer Vertragsschliessungen gehört⁽³⁴⁾. Von diesem Bezug her ist damit zu rechnen, dass auch die Verwendung von שבע auf das Vorhandensein eines gewichtigen politischen Aspektes in der Beziehung Jonathans zu David hinweist.

g) Auch eine Untersuchung der Wurzel נעם, die in 2 Sam 1,23 und 26 belegt ist, führt zu komplexeren Resultaten, als es die Ausführungen von S. Schroer und T. Staubli nahelegen. Das Adjektiv נעים "angenehm, lieblich" ist 11mal belegt, das Verb נעם "angenehm/lieblich sein" 8mal und das Substantiv נעם "Annehmlichkeit; Freundlichkeit, Huld" 7mal; zusammengezählt ergibt das 26 Stellen. Von diesen 26 finden sich nur zwei im Hohenlied⁽³⁵⁾. Damit ist deutlich, dass die Wurzel נעם nicht als Charakteristikum der Sprache des Hohenliedes angesehen werden kann; es besteht darum auch kein Anlass, vom Vorkommen dieser Wurzel in 2 Sam 1 unmittelbar auf einen Konnex mit dem Hohenlied zu schliessen. Wichtig ist in diesem Zusammenhang eine weitere Beobachtung: Klammert man die beiden Belege in 2 Sam 1 einmal aus, findet sich ausser im Hohenlied keine einzige Stelle, an der die Wurzel נעם in einem Bezug zu einer erotischen Beziehung steht. Von daher nötigt nichts zur Annahme, dass ein solcher Bezug in 2 Sam 1 vorliegen müsste.

⁽³³⁾ Zu dieser Gruppe gehören die folgenden sechs Belege: 2 Sam 3,9 (Zusage JHWHs der Thronübernahme Davids); 1 Kön 1,13.17.29f.; 2 Kön 11,4.

⁽³⁴⁾ Vgl. J. WOŹNIAK, "Drei verschiedene literarische Beschreibungen des Bundes zwischen Jonathan und David", *BZ* 27 (1983) 213-214. Zu den Schwüren in neuassyrischen Vertragsschliessungen siehe S. PARPOLA - K. WATANABE, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties XXXVIII*.

⁽³⁵⁾ In Hld 1,16 findet sich ein Beleg für das Adjektiv, in Hld 7,7 einer für das Verb.

Unter den von S. Schroer und T. Staubli nicht genannten exegetischen Beobachtungen sind die folgenden zu nennen:

a) In 1 Sam 18,1 findet sich die Notiz, dass die נפש Jonathans sich bindet oder gebunden wird (קשר ni) an die נפש Davids. Der Wurzel קשר kommt eine besondere Bedeutung zu, da mit ihr die erste Beschreibung des Verhältnisses Jonathans zu David vorgenommen wird. Nun ist folgende Beobachtung auffällig: Von den insgesamt 44 Belegen der verschiedenen Stammformen des Verbs קשר entfallen 27 auf zwischenmenschliche Beziehungen; von diesen 27 Belegen aber, zu denen auch der Beleg in 1 Sam 18,1 zu zählen ist, beschreiben 25 ein politisches Zusammenspannen zweier Parteien; nur in einem Fall⁽³⁶⁾ wird קשר zur Bezeichnung einer tiefen inneren Beziehung verwendet, wobei es dabei um eine Vater-Sohn-Beziehung geht. Nun kann zwar nicht ausgeschlossen werden, dass auch in bezug auf das Verhältnis Jonathans zu David mit קשר auf eine solche emotionale Bindung hingewiesen wird; dafür, dass auch eine erotische Komponente eingeschlossen ist, lässt sich aber kein einziger Beleg von קשר beiziehen. Wenn also auch eine emotionale Konnotation nicht auszuschliessen ist, so dürfte ihr aufgrund der gängigen Verwendung von קשר doch kein grosses Gewicht zukommen; im Vordergrund steht vielmehr die politische Konnotation, die allein im literarischen Kontext von 1 Sam 18,1 — i.e. in den Samuel- und Königebüchern — belegt ist⁽³⁷⁾. Insbesondere ist dabei auf die Verwendungen der Wurzel in 1 Sam 22,8.13 hinzuweisen, da sich diese innerhalb des Rahmens der Saul-David-Geschichten befinden; bei beiden Belegen ist die politische Konnotation unzweifelhaft dominant.

b) Nicht zu übersehen ist, dass die mit den Wurzeln חפץ, אהב und קשר bezeichneten inneren Bewegungen in der Tendenz einseitig auf David hin ausgerichtet sind, wogegen der Aspekt der Gegenseitigkeit der Beziehung zwischen David und Jonathan stärker in den Hintergrund tritt. Auch diese Beobachtung unterstreicht die politische (und theologische) Dimension dieser Beziehung und lässt ihren emotionalen Aspekt zurücktreten. Das lässt aber ein Verständnis des Verhältnisses zwischen den beiden Protagonisten,

⁽³⁶⁾ Gen 44,30.

⁽³⁷⁾ Vgl. zu קשר auch die Bemerkungen bei P.R. ACKROYD, "The Verb Love-*āhēb* in the David-Jonathan Narratives - A Footnote", VT 25 (1975) 213f. Die politische Deutung wird z.B. auch von R.W. KLEIN, *1 Samuel* (WBC; Waco 1983) übernommen.

das hier eine homosexuelle Beziehung vermutet, zusätzlich als unwahrscheinlich erscheinen.

c) In der ganzen David-Jonathan-Geschichte finden sich keine Belege derjenigen Verben, die im Zusammenhang von eindeutig sexuellen Beziehungen regelmässig vorkommen, nämlich שָׁכַב und יָדַע. In allen Texten, die zweifelsfrei von homosexuellen Aktivitäten sprechen⁽³⁸⁾, wird das eine oder andere der beiden Verben verwendet: יָדַע in Gen 19,5 und Ri 19,22, שָׁכַב in Lev 18,22 und 20,13. Dass gerade diejenigen Verben, die das Verhältnis Jonathans zu David eindeutig als ein die sexuelle Komponente einschliessendes Verhältnis kenntlich gemacht hätten, fehlen, darf bei der Deutung dieses Verhältnisses nicht unberücksichtigt bleiben⁽³⁹⁾. Dem Fehlen dieser Verben ist deshalb um so grösseres Gewicht beizumessen, weil es schlecht mit dem Versuch begründet werden kann, den wahren Charakter der Beziehung zu verhüllen, um David nicht in ein schlechtes Licht geraten zu lassen. Dass ein solcher Versuch vorliegen könnte, ist nicht wahrscheinlich, da auch sonst nicht versucht wird, in der damaligen Zeit negativ bewertete Verhaltensweisen wie seinen Ehebruch mit Batseba einschliesslich des anschliessenden Mordes an Uria zu verschleiern⁽⁴⁰⁾.

⁽³⁸⁾ Ohne dass im Falle von Gen 19 und Ri 19 behauptet werden soll, dass der geschlechtliche Aspekt den Fokus des Problems bezeichnet, das in den beiden Berichten geschildert wird. Zu Gen 19 vgl. die aufschlussreiche Studie von K. STONE, "Gender and Homosexuality in Judges 19: Subject-Honor, Object-Shame?", *JSOT* 67 (1995) 87-107.

⁽³⁹⁾ Die moderne Fragestellung, ob auch dann, wenn festzustellen ist, dass das Verhältnis zwischen Jonathan und David nicht im engeren Sinn als homosexuell verstanden werden kann, doch mit einer gewissen homoerotisch-schwärmerischen Komponente in ihrer Beziehung zu rechnen ist, lässt sich aufgrund der Texte kaum beantworten. Es ist aber zu bedenken, dass grundsätzlich fraglich ist, ob das aus der modernen Psychologie stammende Modell einer solchen Art der Beziehung auf die Lebenswelt des antiken Israel überhaupt anwendbar ist. Zudem müssen solche entwicklungspsychologischen Phasen mit homoerotischen Zügen in Jugendfreundschaften vom Phänomen der Homosexualität im engeren Sinn deutlich unterschieden werden. — Nähere Angaben bezüglich der Beschreibung homoerotischer Entwicklungsphasen in der Psychologie siehe bei H.-F. RICHTER, *Geschlechtlichkeit, Ehe und Familie im Alten Testament und seiner Umwelt* (BET 10; Frankfurt a.M. 1978) 62. Zur Schwierigkeit der inhaltlichen Bestimmung des Terminus "Homosexualität" vgl. die Hinweise bei M. STEWART VAN LEEUWEN, "To Ask a Better Question", *Interp* 51 (1997) 144-146.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Siehe 2 Sam 11. — Würde man behaupten, dass ein allfälliges homosexuelles Verhalten Davids in der damaligen Zeit gar nicht auf einhellige

III. Die narrative Ebene

a) Der literarische Kontext, in den die Beschreibungen des Verhältnisses zwischen Jonathan und David eingebettet sind, ist die Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids. Innerhalb dieses Erzählkomplexes bildet die Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David eines von mehreren Elementen, die für den Aufstieg Davids zum Thron bedeutsam sind. Sowohl die "Liebe" Jonathans zu David als auch der "Bund" zwischen ihnen stellen jeweils nur ein Element in einem ganzen Geflecht ähnlicher Vorgänge dar, deren Einordnung in die alles umgreifende Teleologie deutlich ist. Die Geschichte wird von ihrem Ziel her, der Übernahme des Thrones durch David, erzählt, und alle Erfahrungen von Zuwendung gegenüber David und alle Bundesschlüsse mit David dienen der Erreichung dieses Ziels. Von dieser Gesamtbewegung darf die Beschreibung der Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David nicht losgelöst werden, sondern es muss ihr der besondere Ort innerhalb der auf das — politische! — Ziel ausgerichteten narrativen Gesamtlinie zugewiesen werden. So folgt auf den Bundesschluss zwischen Jonathan und David (1 Sam 18,3; 23,18) ein Bundesschluss zwischen Abner und David (2 Sam 3,12f.) und schliesslich ein Bundesschluss zwischen den Ältesten Israels und David (2 Sam 5,3), durch den David die erste Etappe des Ziels, das Königtum über Juda, erreicht. Eine ähnliche Bewegung lässt sich mit Blick auf die David entgegengebrachte "Liebe" beobachten: Zunächst ist es Saul, dessen Beziehung zu David mit der Wurzel אהב umschrieben wird (1 Sam 16,21); die nächste Stufe bildet die Liebe Jonathans zu David (1 Sam 18,3; 20,17), dann diejenige Michals (1 Sam 18,20[28])⁽⁴¹⁾, dann diejenige der Hofleute Sauls (1 Sam 18,22) und schliesslich diejenige des ganzen Volkes (1 Sam 18,16[28]).

b) Dass die Beziehung Jonathans zu David neben den emotionalen starke politische Konnotationen mit sich trägt, wird einerseits aus der eben geschilderten Einordnung in die umfassendere "Liebes-Bewegung" hin zu David deutlich, andererseits aus dem

Ablehnung gestossen sei, wäre die Hypothese einer bewussten Verschleierung noch weniger plausibel und das Fehlen eindeutiger Hinweise auf ein solches Verhalten noch weniger erklärbar.

(41) Die textliche Überlieferung von 1 Sam 18,28 ist nicht klar; nach der Lesart des MT ist Michal Subjekt der Liebe zu David, nach derjenigen der LXX ist Israel Subjekt dieser Liebe.

engen Konnex mit der Bundeterminologie. Dass diese im politischen Sinn zu verstehen ist, wird wiederum aus ihrer Hinordnung auf das Ziel der Thronübernahme deutlich, aber auch aus den Parallelen, die sich zwischen den Bundesschlüssen Jonathans und Davids einerseits und hethitischen, syrischen und assyrischen Bundesdarstellungen andererseits feststellen lassen. So finden sich in hethitischen Bündnissen, die die Übernahme des Thrones durch einen Vasall vorsehen, Bestimmungen, die diese Thronnachfolge in den Rahmen einer Freundschaft einbinden⁽⁴²⁾. Genau diese Situation begegnet aber in 1 Sam 18,1-4 wieder. Vor diesem Hintergrund erscheint der in dieser Perikope erwähnte Bund als eine nahe Analogie zu einem hethitischen Vasallenabkommen, wobei der vorangegangene Sieg über Goliath es ist, der David in den Augen Jonathans zu einem würdigen möglichen Bundespartner gemacht hat. In 1 Sam 20 liegt an einigen Stellen eher eine Analogie zu Bundesschlüssen zwischen ebenbürtigen Partnern, an anderen eher eine Analogie zu Vasallenabkommen nahe: Analogien zu Bundesschlüssen zwischen gleichberechtigten Partnern liegen in V. 23 und 42 vor, wo der Aspekt der Gegenseitigkeit betont wird; dagegen weisen die Formulierungen in V. 8 ("dein Knecht") und 41 (Proskynese Davids) auf eine Unterordnung Davids unter Jonathan, V. 14-16 dagegen auf eine Unterordnung Jonathans unter David. Der einseitige Schwur Jonathans, von dem in V. 17 berichtet wird, weist Jonathan möglicherweise ebenfalls eine untergeordnete Stellung zu⁽⁴³⁾. Eine weitere Parallele zu altorientalischen Bundesschlüssen, in denen regelmässig Götter als Zeugen genannt werden⁽⁴⁴⁾, liegt im Hinweis auf JHWH als Zeuge des Abkommens (V. 8.12.23.42). Beim Bundesschluss in 1 Sam 23,16-18, der von der künftigen Königsstellung Davids ausgeht, liegt wieder eine Analogie zu hethitischen und assyrischen Thronnachfolgeverträgen vor⁽⁴⁵⁾; wie in 1 Sam 20 wird wieder JHWH als Bundeszeuge aufgeführt. Zudem finden sich weitere Elemente innerhalb der Erzählung, die darauf

⁽⁴²⁾ Siehe WOŹNIAK, "Drei verschiedene literarische Beschreibungen", 214.

⁽⁴³⁾ Nach WOŹNIAK, "Drei verschiedene literarische Beschreibungen", 216, scheint die Stellung Jonathans hier derjenigen von Vasallen in hethitischen und syrischen Bündnissen zu entsprechen (vgl. "Drei verschiedene literarische Beschreibungen", 213f.).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Vgl. WOŹNIAK, "Drei verschiedene literarische Beschreibungen", 213-214.; zur Stellung der Götter als Zeugen in neuassyrischen Vertragstexten siehe PARPOLA - WATANABE, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties* XXXVII.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Vgl. WOŹNIAK, "Drei verschiedene literarische Beschreibungen", 217.

hinweisen, dass der Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David eine politische Dimension eignet. Zu diesen Elementen gehört die Übergabe von Mantel und Rüstung, Schwert, Bogen und Gürtel, von der in 1 Sam 18,4 berichtet wird. Dass es hier nicht einfach um ein Freundschaftszeichen in dem Sinn geht, dass der Geber anzeigt, wie sehr er dem Empfänger sich selber geben möchte, sondern um einen Akt mit politischen Implikationen, zeigt etwa der Vergleich mit 2 Kön 11,10⁽⁴⁶⁾. Weiter ist darauf hinzuweisen, dass in den Begegnungen zwischen Jonathan und David, von denen in 1 Sam 20 und 23 die Rede ist, politische Themen eine wesentliche Rolle spielen. Nicht um Liebeständeleien geht es in 1 Sam 20, sondern um den Schutz Davids vor der politischen Verfolgung durch Saul. Und die wesentlichen Worte, die in diesem Gespräch gewechselt werden, weisen weit über eine rein persönliche Beziehung hinaus: Mit dem Wunsch Jonathans, dass JHWH mit David sein möge, wie er mit seinem Vater gewesen ist (V. 13), wird auf die Übernahme des Königtums durch David Bezug genommen. In V. 14-16 wird ebenfalls die Situation vorausgesetzt, dass David als Nachfolger Sauls das Königsamt innehat. Auf die politische Dimension der Beziehung weist weiter die Proskynese Davids vor Jonathan, von der in V. 41 berichtet wird. Ebenso weist die Ausdehnung des Geltungsbereichs der Bundes auf die Nachkommen Davids und Jonathans auf eine Dimension der Beziehung, die über die persönliche Ebene hinausragt. Die in 1 Sam 23 berichtete Begegnung zwischen Jonathan und David hat ihren Skopus in der politischen Weissagung Jonathans, dass David und nicht er selber König über Israel sein werde (V. 17). In diesem Kapitel verschwindet der persönlich-emotionale Aspekt der Beziehung ganz.

c) Insgesamt dürfte die Art der politischen Ebene der Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David so zu umschreiben sein, dass Jonathan die Rolle des Übermittlers des Königtums von Saul an David zukommt, womit die Rechtmässigkeit der Thronübernahme durch David unterstrichen wird⁽⁴⁷⁾. Das wird bereits in der Perikope 1

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Vgl. THOMPSON, "The Significance of the Verb *Love*", 335. Anders H.W. HERTZBERG, *Die Samuelbücher* (ATD; Göttingen 1956) zur Stelle.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Vgl. D. JOBLING, *The Sense of Biblical Narrative* (JSOTSS 7; Sheffield ²1986) 14. — Dass der Übergang des Königtums von Saul an David überhaupt als theologisches Problem empfunden wurde, setzt voraus, dass das Königtum als erblich verstanden wurde. Der Ablauf der Ereignisse zeigt, dass diese Voraussetzung bei allen Beteiligten als gegeben angesehen werden muss (speziell zu erwähnen ist hier die Selbstverständlichkeit, mit der Saul-Sohn

Sam 18,1-4 deutlich: Die Übergabe von Mantel und Rüstung, Schwert, Bogen und Gürtel dürfte zu verstehen sein als symbolischer Hinweis auf die Übergabe des Königtums an David⁽⁴⁸⁾. Jonathan fungiert hier nicht nur als der deutlich Höhergestellte, indem er es ist, der die genannten Gegenstände überreicht, ohne dass David etwas Vergleichbares zurückgeben könnte, und indem die vorangehende Bundesschliessung eine Bundes-Gewährung Jonathans an David darstellt, sondern Jonathan wird zugleich in gewisser Weise mit dem Inhaber des Königsamtes identifiziert, indem das Überreichen von Rüstung, Schwert, Bogen und Gürtel an die vorangehende Übergabe von Helm, Panzer und Schwert Sauls an David erinnert (1 Sam 17,38f.). Auch aus 1 Sam 15,27f. geht hervor, dass insbesondere der Mantel (מעיל) symbolisch für das Königtum stehen kann. Die in 1 Sam 18,1-4 greifbare Erhöhung Jonathans auf die Stufe des Königs wird bereits in den vorangehenden Erzählungen vorbereitet: In 1 Sam 14,14f. wird deutlich, dass JHWH auf der Seite Jonathans steht, wie er ehemals auf der Seite Sauls stand, und in 1 Sam 14,45 wird deutlich, dass auch das Volk auf der Seite Jonathans steht; in 1 Sam 13,22 und 14,21 schliesslich wird Jonathan als eine Art Ko-Regent neben Saul erwähnt. Die Erhöhung Jonathans auf die Stufe des Königs erfolgt also zum einen als Ergänzung Sauls bzw. Identifikation mit ihm, zum anderen als Ersetzung Sauls⁽⁴⁹⁾. Indem Jonathan in dieser doppelten Weise als auf der Stufe des Königsamtes stehend dargestellt wird, ist es möglich, dass er seine Rolle als Übermittler dieses Amtes von Saul an David wahrnimmt. Diese Übermittlung erfolgt wiederum durch die doppelte Bewegung von Identifikation mit David einerseits und Ersetzung andererseits, wobei anders als im Falle des Verhältnisses zu Saul Jonathan seinen Freund nicht

Ischbaal als Nachfolger Sauls auftrat und von den Nordstämmen anerkannt wurde). Dass - neben der Vermittlung des Thronfolgerechts durch Jonathan - die Ehe Davids mit Michal ein weiteres Element des Nachweises der Legitimität der Nachfolge Davids auf dem Thron Sauls darstellt, ist wahrscheinlich.

(⁴⁸) So z.B. R.W. KLEIN, *1 Samuel*, zur Stelle; EXUM, (*Tragedy and Biblical Narrative*, 74, 76; GUNN, *The Fate of King Saul*, 80 und JOBLING, *The Sense*, 20. Diese Deutung wird von STOEBE, *Das erste Buch Samuelis*, ohne nähere Begründung zurückgewiesen.

(⁴⁹) Treffend formuliert JOBLING: "The relationship between Saul and Jonathan shows *both* role-identification between the two ... *and* replacement of Saul by Jonathan" (*The Sense*, 16).

ersetzt, sondern sich von ihm ersetzen lässt. Im Blick auf 1 Sam 18,1-4 lässt sich die Identifizierung in der Phrase *וַיֵּחַבְרוּ יְהוֹנָתָן כְּנָפָיו* feststellen, die Ersetzung im Vorgang der Übergabe von Kleidung und Waffen. Auffällig ist, dass beide Akte von Saul unmittelbar anschliessend bestätigt werden und damit der so dargestellte politische Vorgang zusätzliche Legitimität gewinnt⁽⁵⁰⁾.

In 1 Sam 20,1-10 ist Jonathan wiederum der in der Rolle des Ko-Regenten Stehende, der als solcher zugleich — wie in 1 Sam 18,1-4 — der Gewährende ist, während David zunächst der Bittende ist. Zugleich findet eine Identifizierung von David mit Jonathan statt, indem seine gefährliche Lage derjenigen Jonathans in 1 Sam 14, in die er aufgrund der Übertretung des Enthaltungsgebotes geriet, in gewisser Weise entspricht. Im folgenden Abschnitt 1 Sam 20,11-17 wird dann der Übergang von der Identifikation Davids mit Jonathan zur Ersetzung Jonathans durch David vollzogen: David wird als der zukünftige König dargestellt, dem gegenüber Jonathan nun als der Bittende erscheint. Indem Jonathan jene Art von Mitsein JHWHs, die bisher Saul gegolten hat, David zuspricht, verzichtet der für die Nachfolge Sauls vorgesehene Sohn implizit auf die eigene Thronfolge und anerkennt die Legitimität des Übergangs der Königswürde an David (V. 13). Möglicherweise ist bereits die in V. 4 ausgedrückte Bereitschaft Jonathans, David jede Bitte zu gewähren, als indirekter Hinweis auf die Übertragung des Thronnachfolgerechts auf David zu verstehen⁽⁵¹⁾. In V. 14-16 behandelt dann Jonathan David deutlich bereits wie den zukünftigen König. Diese Linie findet ihre Fortsetzung in 1 Sam 23,16-18, wobei in diesem Abschnitt ein wesentliches neues Element hinzukommt: Jonathan gibt zu verstehen, dass er weiss, dass der Übergang der Thronnachfolge von ihm auf David dem Willen JHWHs entspricht⁽⁵²⁾. Das bedeutet aber, dass die Zuwendung Jonathans zu David nicht nur in freundschaftlichen Regungen, die ganz der emotionalen Ebene zuzurechnen sind, begründet ist, sondern auch im Wissen um den Plan JHWHs. Die Beziehung Jonathans zu David ist in diesem Sinne also auch theologisch motiviert. Das bedeutet aber, dass eine

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Vgl. zum Ganzen JOBLING, *The Sense*, 19.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Vgl. R.W. KLEIN, *1 Samuel*, zur Stelle.

⁽⁵²⁾ In seinem Kommentar zu 1 Sam 23 bestreitet STOEBE, dass diese Stelle dahingehend interpretiert werden darf, "dass Jonathan sich selbst als präsumptiven Nachfolger seines Vaters ansieht, aber auf seine Rechte verzichtet, um sich von vornherein mit einer zweiten Stelle zu begnügen".

Deutung der Beziehung als homosexuelle Beziehung dem textlichen Befund nicht gerecht wird⁽⁵³⁾.

d) Aus der Sicht des Erzählers der Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids, in die die Berichte über die Beziehung Jonathans zu David eingebettet sind, ist der Aufstieg Davids letztlich eine von JHWH geleitete Bewegung. Das wird etwa daran sichtbar, dass bereits am Beginn des Weges vom Erzähler deutlich gemacht wird, dass David der von JHWH erwählte Nachfolger Sauls ist (1 Sam 16,1.12f.), und weiter daran, dass festgestellt wird, dass JHWH mit David ist, während er von Saul gewichen ist (1 Sam 18,12.14); zudem wird an der Stelle, an der David am Ziel angekommen ist, indem er das Königtum über ganz Israel erlangt und Jerusalem erobert hat, wiederum festgehalten, dass JHWH mit ihm ist (2 Sam 5,10) und dass JHWH selber es ist, der ihn als König über Israel bestätigt und sein Königtum emporgebracht hat (1 Sam 5,12). Diese Hinweise des Erzählers zeigen, dass der Aufstieg Davids theologisch interpretiert und als Ergebnis des Eingreifens JHWHs zugunsten Davids verstanden wird. Vor diesem Hintergrund wäre es schwer verständlich, wenn der Erzähler Hinweise auf eine mögliche homosexuelle Beziehung Davids in seinen Berichten eingeführt oder stehen gelassen hätte, da keine Phase in der Geschichte der offiziellen JHWH-Religion — der offensichtlich auch der Erzähler und seine intendierten Leser angehören — greifbar wird, in der homosexuelle Beziehungen als nicht anstößig empfunden worden wären⁽⁵⁴⁾. Aus demselben Grund muss auch die mehrfache

⁽⁵³⁾ Identifizierung Jonathans und Davids und Ersetzung Jonathans durch David lassen sich bereits in 1 Sam 17 feststellen: So, wie Jonathan in 1 Sam 14 militärtechnisch betrachtet aus einer hoffnungslos inferioren Position heraus einen Sieg gegen die Philister erringt, so gelingt es David in 1 Sam 17, aus einer analogen Position der Schwäche heraus den Philister Goliath zu überwinden; und wie der Sieg Jonathans in 1 Sam 14 theologisch begründet wird (V. 6: "JHWH ist es ein leichtes, zu helfen, es sei durch viel oder durch wenig"), so wird auch der Sieg Davids in 1 Sam 17 in ähnlicher Weise auf Gottes Wirken zurückgeführt (V. 37: "JHWH, der mich aus der Tatze des Löwen und des Bären errettet hat, wird mich auch aus der Hand dieses Philisters erretten"; V. 47: "JHWH schafft nicht durch Schwert und Speer Sieg ...").

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Dabei ist es nicht einmal entscheidend, ob die Gesetzesbestimmungen von Lev 18 und 20 oder eine Vorform dieser Bestimmungen für die Zeit Davids oder des Erzählers der Aufstiegsgeschichte vorausgesetzt werden können; denn wenn der Bericht über Sodom und Gomorrha in Gen 19, in dem das Thema der homosexuellen Beziehungen ebenfalls auftaucht, J zuzuweisen ist und wenn J in die Zeit Salomos zu datieren ist, liegt ein in die Nähe der Zeit Davids

Betonung, dass die Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David von Bundesschlüssen oder Schwüren begleitet war, die vor JHWH geschlossen respektive abgelegt wurden⁽⁵⁵⁾, als mit der Annahme eines homosexuellen Charakters dieser Beziehung inkompatibel angesehen werden. Wie sollte es möglich sein, dass ausgerechnet JHWH zum Zeugen und Garanten eines Bundes gemacht wird, wenn dieser Bund mit einer Art von sexueller Beziehung verbunden wäre, für deren Bejahung jedes positive Zeugnis innerhalb der JHWH-Religion fehlt, für deren Ablehnung aber — wenn auch in der Datierung umstrittene — Zeugnisse vorliegen? Eine solche Annahme wäre weder im Blick auf den Erzähler bzw. die innere Konsistenz der Erzählung noch im Blick auf die tatsächlichen historischen Gegebenheiten, die hinter der Erzählung stehen, plausibel.

IV. Der kanonische Rahmen

a) In der Regel wird davon ausgegangen, dass die auf homosexuelles Verhalten Bezug nehmenden Gesetzesbestimmungen in Lev 18,22 und 20,13 zur Zeit Davids bzw. der Abfassung oder Redaktion der Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids noch nicht in Geltung standen. Aufgrund dieser Annahme wird gefolgert, dass das Verhalten Jonathans und Davids nicht an den Gesetzesbestimmungen des Buches Lev gemessen werden könne⁽⁵⁶⁾. Aber auch dann, wenn man der üblichen Datierung folgt und annimmt, dass die in Lev vorliegenden Gesetzesbestimmungen über homosexuelles Verhalten erst nach den in der Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids überlieferten

reichender Beleg für die Ablehnung homosexuellen Verhaltens in der JHWH - Religion ohnehin vor. Aber auch dann, wenn überhaupt keines der schriftlichen Zeugnisse über die Ablehnung homosexuellen Verhaltens dieser Zeit zugerechnet wird, lässt sich die Beobachtung nicht umgehen, dass ein Zeugnis für eine positive Bewertung homosexuellen Verhaltens bisher nicht vorliegt.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Von einem Bund, der vor JHWH geschlossen wird, ist in 1 Sam 20,8 und 23,18 die Rede, von JHWH als Zeuge des gegenseitig bindenden Schwurs in 1 Sam 20,23 und 42.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Wenn man nicht überhaupt bestreitet, dass die Bestimmungen in Lev 18,22 und 20,12 grundsätzlich gegen jede Art homosexuellen Verhaltens gerichtet sind, wie das etwa S. SCHROER und T. STAUBLI tun ("Saul, David und Jonatan", 16f.; anders dagegen z.B. K. HOHEISEL, "Homosexualität", RAC 16 [1994] Sp. 328). Dass Lev 18,22 und 20,12 nicht gegen jede Art homosexuellen Verhaltens gerichtet sein sollten, konnte m.E. bisher nicht einsichtig gemacht werden; die Frage kann hier aber nicht weiter verfolgt werden.

Ereignissen ihre jetzige literarische Form gefunden haben, lässt sich keineswegs ausschliessen, dass die in Lev 18 und 20 enthaltenen Bestimmungen der Sache nach nicht schon vorher in Geltung standen⁽⁵⁷⁾. Dass eine solche Vermutung tatsächlich naheliegt, ist aus den folgenden beiden Beobachtungen zu schliessen: Zum einen fehlt ausserhalb der David-Jonathan-Geschichten jeder positive Hinweis darauf, dass in der Geschichte der JHWH-Religion je eine andere, zustimmende Einstellung gegenüber homosexuellem Verhalten vorhanden war. Auch wenn man dem Gedanken, dass die Aufnahme des Verbotes homosexueller Handlungen in Lev als Hinweis darauf gedeutet werden könnte, dass solche Handlungen tatsächlich vorkamen⁽⁵⁸⁾, zustimmt, folgt daraus noch nicht, dass solche Handlungen je in Übereinstimmung mit der offiziellen JHWH-Religion gestanden wären. Viel wahrscheinlicher ist, dass die das Sexualverhalten grundsätzlich regelnden Vorschriften nicht nur zum frühen Grundbestand der JHWH-Religion, sondern - wenn man die Herausbildung der JHWH-Religion erst in einer späteren Phase der Geschichte derjenigen Grösse ansetzt, die später als "Israel" bezeichnet wurde — auch in eine frühe Phase der Geschichte des späteren "Israel" gehört⁽⁵⁹⁾. Zum anderen wird die Akzeptanz einer eintägigen Abwesenheit, wie sie im Verhalten Sauls gegenüber David in 1 Sam 20,26 zum Ausdruck kommt, mit dem Hinweis auf eine mögliche eintägige Unreinheit Davids begründet. Diese Begründung verweist aber unmittelbar auf die Reinheitsbestimmungen in Lev 7,20f. und 15,16-18 als wahrscheinlichsten Verstehenshintergrund⁽⁶⁰⁾. Damit liegt aber ein positiver Hinweis dafür vor, dass die Gesetzesbestimmungen des Heiligkeitgesetzes wenigstens zum Teil — wenn auch nicht in der kodifizierten Formulierung, so doch der Sache nach — zur Zeit Davids oder zur Zeit der Abfassung oder Redaktion der Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids bekannt gewesen sein müssen.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ K. HOEISEL vermutet, dass die Verbote von Lev 18,22 und 20,13 bereits in der vorstaatlichen Sippenverfassung wurzeln ("Homosexualität" Sp. 332).

⁽⁵⁸⁾ So SCHROER - T. STAUBLI, "Saul, David und Jonatan", 15.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Siehe W.H. SCHMIDT, *Die Zehn Gebote im Rahmen alttestamentlicher Ethik* (EdF 281; Darmstadt, 1993) 10.117.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Vgl. R.W. KLEIN, *1 Samuel*, zur Stelle. — Das setzt aber nicht voraus, dass diese Bestimmungen schon in der jetzt greifbaren kodifizierten Form vorgelegen haben müssen.

b) Sowohl von David als auch von Jonathan wird im literarischen Kontext der Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids berichtet, dass sie heterosexuelle Beziehungen hatten. Im Blick auf David soll hier der Hinweis auf die Beziehungen zu Michal (1 Sam 18,27 u.a.) und Abigail (1 Sam 25,42) genügen. Von Jonathans heterosexuellen Beziehungen erfährt der Leser zum einen indirekt durch die Erwähnung eines Sohnes Jonathans in 2 Sam 9 (Meribaal), zum anderen aber auch direkt aus dem Munde Jonathans selber, indem dieser in 1 Sam 20,42 von "meinen Nachkommen" spricht. Diese biographischen Umstände lassen die Vermutung, dass Jonathan und allenfalls auch David homosexuell waren und es sich bei der Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David um eine homosexuelle Beziehung gehandelt hat, als wenig wahrscheinlich erscheinen. Allerdings ist zuzugeben, dass aufgrund der heterosexuellen Beziehungen allein nicht zwingend auf das Nicht-Vorhandensein einer von der heterosexuellen Norm abweichenden "sexuellen Orientierung" geschlossen werden kann.

c) Dass David in breiten Schichten des Alten Testaments als idealtypischer Herrscher und als Angelpunkt der in eine nähere oder fernere Zukunft reichenden Messiaserwartung verstanden und dass er im Neuen Testament nicht nur als Vorfahre Jesu, sondern auch als beispielhafter Gottesmann und als Vor-Bild des gekommenen Messias aufgefasst wird⁽⁶¹⁾, wäre kaum möglich, wenn der Verdacht an ihm haftete, mit Jonathan eine homosexuelle Beziehung gepflegt zu haben. Denn die Ablehnung solcher Beziehungen in späteren Schichten des Alten Testaments und im nachbiblischen Judentum ebenso wie im Neuen Testament ist einhellig⁽⁶²⁾. Die offene

⁽⁶¹⁾ Zum Davidbild des Alten Testaments (ausserhalb der Samuel- und Königebücher) siehe v.a. Jes 9,6; 16,5; 22,9.22; 55,3; Jer 13,13; 17,25; 22,2.4.30; 23,5; 29,16; 30,9; 33,15.17.21-22.26; 36,30; Ez 34,23-23.; 37,24-25.; Hos 3,5; Am 6,5; 9,11; Sach 12,8.10.12; 13,1; Esr 3,10; 8,20; Neh 3,15; 12,24.36-37.45-46; hinzu kommen die Erwähnungen Davids in den Chronikbüchern und in den Psalmen (73mal in Psalmüberschriften), sowie indirekte Bezugnahmen wie "Wurzelschoss Isais" in Jes 11. Zum Davidbild des Neuen Testaments siehe v.a. Mt 1,6.17.20; 9,27; 12,3.23; 15,22; 20,30f.; 21,9.15; 22,42f.45; Mk 2,25; 10,47-48; 11,10; 12,35-37; Lk 1,27; 2,4; 3,31; 6,3; 18,38-39; 20,41-42.44; Apg 1,16; 2,25.29.34; 4,25; Rom 1,3; 4,6; 11,9; 2 Tim 2,8; Offb 3,7; 5,5; 22,16.

⁽⁶²⁾ Zu den späteren Schichten des Alten Testaments sind Lev 18,22 und 20,13 dann zu rechnen, wenn man den üblichen Datierungen des Heiligkeitgesetzes folgt. Zur Haltung des nachbiblischen Judentums siehe z.B. San 55a; 73a; Suk 29a; Yev 55b. Zusammenfassende Hinweise und

Darstellung des Ehebruchs Davids mit Batseba in 2 Sam 11 kann nicht als Gegenargument angefügt werden, da ein unzweifelhaftes Eingeständnis der Schuld von seiten Davids auf den Ehebruch mit Batseba folgt (2 Sam 12,13), was in bezug auf die Beziehung mit Jonathan nicht der Fall ist⁽⁶³⁾.

d) Was die Beziehungen der David-Jonathan-Geschichten zum Hohenlied betrifft, ist folgendes zu bemerken: Parallelen in einzelnen Formulierungen sind zwar nicht in dem Ausmass vorhanden, wie von S. Schroer und T. Staubli angenommen wird; dennoch sind solche Parallelen keineswegs grundsätzlich von der Hand zu weisen. Die Erklärung, dass diese Parallelen darauf hinweisen, dass es beim Verhältnis Jonathans zu David um eine Art Liebesverhältnis geht, das in Analogie zu dem im Hohenlied beschriebenen Verhältnis die erotische Komponente mit einschliesst, geht aber am beobachtbaren Sachverhalt vorbei. Die Parallelen sind vielmehr zum einen sachlich bedingt: Enge, nicht-erotische Freundschaftsbeziehungen stehen von der Sache her zu intimen Liebesbeziehungen in einer gewissen Nähe, so dass hier ähnliche Sprachverwendungen nicht überraschen. Aufgrund solcher sprachlicher Bezugspunkte auf eine Gleichartigkeit der Beziehung zu schliessen, ist aber eine unzulässige Vergröberung, die der Differenziertheit der Lebenswirklichkeit nicht gerecht wird. Zum andern lassen die sprachlichen Berührungen zwischen den David-Jonathan-Geschichten und dem Hohenlied tatsächlich die Möglichkeit zu, dass mit direkter literarischer Abhängigkeit zu

Literaturangaben finden sich bei HOHEISEL, "Homosexualität" Sp. 333-337. In bezug auf das Neue Testament sind die folgenden Stellen zu nennen: Rom 1,26-27; 1 Kor 6,9; 1 Tim 1,10. Zur Interpretation dieser Stellen siehe z.B. K. HAACKER, "Exegetische Gesichtspunkte zum Thema Homosexualität", *ThBeitr* 25 (1994) 173-180.

⁽⁶³⁾ Ein weiterer Punkt ist hier zu bedenken: Selbst dann, wenn die Beziehung zwischen Jonathan und David tatsächlich eine homosexuelle wäre, würde das über die Normativität dieser Beziehungsform noch nichts sagen. Wollte man aus einer einmaligen Episode des Alten Testaments, die vom Erzähler nicht unmittelbar kritisiert wird, eine generelle Erlaubnis für entsprechende Verhaltensweisen ableiten, die überzeitlich gilt, könnte man etwa mit Berufung auf 2 Sam 8,2 nicht nur die Rechtfertigung von Eroberungskriegen, sondern auch die Rechtfertigung der willkürlichen Tötung von zwei Dritteln der Bevölkerung des unterworfenen Landes ableiten. Dass diejenigen, die in David und Jonathan eine Rechtfertigung für homosexuelle Beziehungen sehen möchten, diese konsequente Schlussfolgerung zu ziehen bereit wären, ist nicht anzunehmen.

rechnen ist. Nach allem, was über die zeitliche Ansetzung der beiden Textkorpora vermutet werden kann, führt die Linie der Abhängigkeit aber nicht wie von S. Schroer und T. Staubli angenommen vom Hohenlied zu den David-Jonathan-Geschichten, sondern in die umgekehrte Richtung. Die sprachlichen Berührungen wären demnach so zu erklären, dass der (oder die) Verfasser des Hohenliedes diejenige Geschichte aus der religiösen Überlieferung Israels, die am ausführlichsten ein inniges Freundschaftsverhältnis beschreibt, an einigen Punkten als literarische Vorlage verwendet hat (bzw. haben).

V. Schlussfolgerungen

Aus den oben angeführten Beobachtungen ergibt sich, dass ein Verständnis der Beziehung zwischen David und Jonathan als einer homosexuellen Beziehung von der textlichen Basis nicht gedeckt wird. Weder lassen sich aus dem Text der Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids eindeutige Hinweise auf einen sexuellen Charakter der Beziehung erheben, noch sind die Beziehungen zum Hohenlied so eng, dass aufgrund der Parallelen zwischen den beiden Büchern auf einen solchen Charakter indirekt geschlossen werden könnte; zudem fehlen die Termini, die an anderen Stellen des Alten Testaments verwendet werden, an denen eindeutig auf homosexuelle Beziehungen referiert wird, völlig. Eine zentrale Stellung kommt dagegen den theologischen und insbesondere den politischen Ebenen der Beziehung zwischen David und Jonathan zu, wie die Bezüge zum literarischen Umfeld der Samuel- und Königebücher und zu Vertragstexten aus der Umwelt Israels gezeigt haben. Dass daneben die Beziehung auch einen starken emotionalen Aspekt aufweist, ist nicht von der Hand zu weisen.

Vieles kommt bei der Deutung der David-Jonathan-Geschichten darauf an, den Blick für die Feinheiten zu wahren und zu schärfen und nicht aufgrund aktueller, polarisierender Interessenlagen zu Vergröberungen zu greifen, die dem Text nicht mehr gerecht werden. Insbesondere geht es darum, den Unterschied zwischen nicht-sexuellen und sexuellen freundschaftlichen Beziehungen im Auge zu behalten. Auffällig bleibt jedenfalls, dass gerade in einer Zeit, in der sowohl auf gesamtgesellschaftlicher als auch auf kirchlicher Ebene der Einfluss der Homosexuellen-Bewegung zunimmt, auch die Exegese der David-Jonathan-Geschichten einer grundsätzlichen

(⁶⁴) Dr. theol. Beat Weber-Lehnherr danke ich herzlich für die kritische Durchsicht des Manuskripts und hilfreiche Anmerkungen.

Form and Meaning in Psalm 131

Which should come first, form-critical analysis or exegesis? Many commentators first attempt to establish the literary form of a text, and then interpret it accordingly. On the face of it, this is the common-sensical thing to do: until we know what sort of literature we are dealing with, how can we analyse its meaning? The trouble with doing this with ancient biblical literature is that the genres are not easy to establish. All too often, a scholar decides that a text belongs to a particular genre and then has to rewrite it because some parts sit rather uneasily with what the characteristics of the genre are supposed to be. Thus, with our present Psalm, one recent commentator decides that because, as it stands, it begins with an address to God but lacks a petition, it must be incomplete, “a fragment”⁽¹⁾. There are no ancient handbooks of Hebrew rhetoric to tell us what the genres actually were. We have to deduce them from the text, and then read the text in the light of the hypothetical genres; a somewhat precariously circular procedure. For this reason, I shall begin with an attempt to expound the text of our Psalm, and defer a verdict on the Form (and related matters, such as dating) for the time being. For the moment I shall simply observe that this short Psalm — “surely one of the most beautiful prayers in the psalter”⁽²⁾ — is usually styled a Psalm of Confidence, like Psalms 16, 23 and 62⁽³⁾. Mowinckel thought it a national Psalm of Lamentation, uttered by an individual on behalf of all⁽⁴⁾. There are those who take the

(1) L.D. CROW, *The Songs of Ascent (Pss 120-134): Their Place in Israelite History and Religion* (SBLD 148; Atlanta 1996) 94.

(2) S.J.L. CROFT, *The Identity of the Individual in the Psalms* (JSOTSS 44; Sheffield, 1987) 149.

(3) Gunkel thought the Psalm of Confidence an adjunct of the Psalm of Individual Lament: in effect, the Certainty of a Hearing, without the Lament itself. Day, however, among others, sees it as a Gattung in its own right. See J. DAY, *Psalms*, (OT Guides; Sheffield 1990) 52.

(4) S. MOWINCKEL, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, transl. D.R.Ap-Thomas. 2 vols. (Oxford 1962) I, 216, 222. (“An individual (‘I’) speaks on behalf of the congregation, identifying himself with its distress: he is, in fact, the liturgical representative of the congregation — the chief priest, or somebody similar”: 222).

"I" to be the King. It is commonly believed, however, e.g. by Anderson⁽⁵⁾, that the "I" in this Psalm is a private individual. Some think that v. 3 was added later. The original *Sitz im Leben* is controverted. Vv. 1-2 are regarded by Michel⁽⁶⁾ as written in imitation of the sort of moral interrogation that we find at the beginning of an entrance liturgy (e.g. in Psalms 15 and 24). Quell accepts this for 1-2a, but 2b he thinks had a separate origin, being a sentiment to be sung by a female worshipper. The two poems may, in his view, have been deposited (as Mowinckel had suggested that texts may sometimes have been) in the Temple. The two brief poems were subsequently joined together, and v. 3 added, to make the Ascent Psalm that we now have⁽⁷⁾. Seybold also strikes a feminist note, arguing that vv. 1-2, if not v. 3 too, are "a personal expression of piety made at the gates of the temple by a woman pilgrim carrying her child"⁽⁸⁾. H. Seidels, however, takes the Psalm to be a professional pilgrimage song emanating from the circle of the Levites⁽⁹⁾.

I. Exegesis

V.1a. It has been observed by several commentators that it is remarkable that a Psalm so apparently individual as 131 should have the expression לְדָוִד in its superscription, whereas the following Psalm, which is very much concerned with the Davidic king and his dynasty, should lack it. It seems conceivable that it has wandered through scribal inadvertence from the one Psalm to the other,

(⁵) "The speaker in the Psalm seems to be an individual rather than the personified Israel, because of the intensely personal language of the composition": A.A. ANDERSON, *The Book of Psalms*, vol. II (NCB; London 1972) 878.

(⁶) "Hier liegt wohl eine vergeistigte Form des Beichtspiegels vor": D. MICHEL, *Tempora und Satzstellung in den Psalmen* (Abhandlungen zur evangelischen Theologie 1; Bonn 1960) 119.

(⁷) G. QUELL, "Struktur und Sinn des Psalms 131", in F. MAASS (ed.), *Das Ferne und Nahe Wort* (Fs. L. Rost) (BZAW 105; Berlin 1967) 173-185.

(⁸) L.C. ALLEN, *Psalms 101-150* (WBCy 21; Milton Keynes 1987) 198, referring to K. SEYBOLD, *Die Wallfahrtspsalmen*. Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte von Psalm 120-134 (Biblische-Theologische Studien 3; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978) 34, 37-38, 54, which I have not been able to consult.

(⁹) See W. BEYERLIN, *Wider die Hybris des Geistes*. Studien zum 131. Psalm (SBS 108; Stuttgart 1982) 11-13.

particularly since the Targum, the Lucianic recension of LXX, and Jerome's *Psalterium Juxta Hebraeos* lack the phrase in this Psalm. The need, however, for kings to be humble is a favourite theme of the "Davidic" Psalms: cf 18,28 [EVV18,27] ("You deliver a humble people, but the haughty eyes you bring down"), 34,7 [EVV 34,6] ("This poor man cried..."), and 101,5 ("A haughty look and an arrogant heart I will not tolerate"). There are other connections too with the monarchy. As noted by de Boer, in 2 Chr 32,25 several of the terms found in our Psalm are used of Hezekiah. Being a proud man (נבה לבו), he was not grateful for the good done to him (גמל עלי), that is, his recovery from illness⁽¹⁰⁾. We shall say more of this text later, but at the moment it is sufficient to note that a royal reading of the Psalm has a certain plausibility. We may add that Ps 62, with which it has affinities (especially with vv. 2.6 [EVV1.5]): אֵךְ לֵאלֹהִים דּוּמִי נַפְשִׁי and אֵךְ אֱלֹהִים דּוּמִיָּה נַפְשִׁי [EVV1.5]], is confidently identified by Eaton⁽¹¹⁾ as a Royal Psalm. These considerations favour the retention in 131,1a of לְדוֹד.

V. 1b. יְהוָה. The Psalm begins with an address to the deity, but ends (v. 3) with a call to Israel to trust in God. If v. 3 is integral to the Psalm, rather than a liturgical addition, it is quite possible that the initial invocation to YHWH is redactional and that the addressee throughout is Israel. In which case, the Psalm could originally have been more in the nature of a personal reflection than a prayer to God. We shall return in due course to the question of the Psalm's unity.

V. 1b. The Psalmist here, as Beyerlin notes, employs the figure *synecdoche*, the part (heart; eyes) standing for the whole person. The part mentioned, however, as he shows, is not chosen at random: the Psalmist is speaking of his whole self, but with special reference to his heart and his eyes. He is not haughty in his heart — that is, probably, in his thinking; he is not lifted up in respect of his eyes — that is, probably, in his way of looking at things. The two expressions thus add up to a single thought, the renunciation of arrogance⁽¹²⁾.

⁽¹⁰⁾ P.A.H. DE BOER, "Psalm CXXXI 2", VT 16 (1966) 287-292.

⁽¹¹⁾ J.H. EATON, *Kingship and the Psalms* (SBT 2nd series 32; London 1976) 49-50.

⁽¹²⁾ BEYERLIN, *Wider die Hybris*, 56-60.

V. 1c. הלכתי בגדלות. The Psalmist could easily here have continued the *synecdoche* by saying that his feet have not stood on high ground; what he has written is, however, perhaps more elegant. If 131 is a Royal Psalm, the implication may be that it belongs more to a king to serve than to seek self-aggrandizement and glory. Greatness and the marvellous pertain more to God than mankind: God is גדול and works נפלאות, Ps 86,10; he alone works גדלות נפלאות, Ps 136,4; it is for the Psalmist to meditate on and recount God's נפלאות, Pss 9,2 [EVV 9,1]; 26,7; 105,2; 145,5 and his גדלות, Ps 145,6. (See also Job 5,9: God's גדלות are unsearchable, his נפלאות innumerable.) Probably, therefore, whether one is a king or not, "to 'go about' (הלך) these normally divine activities is to arrogate divine attributes to oneself"⁽¹³⁾. In course of time the *great matters* came to be interpreted as the problems of Greek philosophy (Sir 3,21-24); Keet, indeed, who believes the Psalm to be post-exilic, supposes this to be quite probably the original meaning⁽¹⁴⁾. Quell, for whom the speaker is a woman, takes the sense to be that she has forsworn theological or cultic reflection, being an unlearned person⁽¹⁵⁾.

V. 2a. אמת. This is normally here (as in e.g. 2 Kgs 9,26; Job 1,11) taken to mean "verily, truly, indeed": GKC 149b. (Originally, when used in this sense, the words were supposedly followed by an imprecation.) So, for example, apart from the majority of modern commentators, David Kimhi⁽¹⁶⁾. G.R. Driver, however, argued for it here meaning "but" (cf the Peshitta and the Syrohexaplar), like the Aram. אלא, Syriac 'ella'⁽¹⁷⁾ (cf Ezek 3,6). I favour, however, the usual interpretation. The idiom was no doubt chosen because the לא

⁽¹³⁾ CROW, *Songs of Ascent*, 95.

⁽¹⁴⁾ C.C. KEET, *A Study of the Psalms of Ascents: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary upon Psalms CXX to CXXIV* (London 1969) 82.

⁽¹⁵⁾ QUELL, "Struktur und Sinn des Psalms 131", 185. He thinks that הלכתי should perhaps be vocalized as a *qal*.

⁽¹⁶⁾ "Used idiomatically to introduce an imprecation or oath, as in [Isa 5,9; 14,24], the meaning being: if such a matter does not come to pass, then let such and such a thing happen, as in 'God do so to me (and more also)' (2 Sam 3,35; 19,14; 1 Kgs 2,23; 2 Kgs 6,31)": D. KIMHI, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimhi on Psalms CXX-CL*, ed. and transl. by J. Baker and E.W. Nicholson (Cambridge 1973) 41.

⁽¹⁷⁾ G.R. DRIVER, "Notes on the Psalms. II. 73-150", *JTS* 44 (1943) 12-23, 21.

would pick up the threefold use of the word in v. 1. We may follow Beyerlin⁽¹⁸⁾, therefore, in here translating it “No!”

שׁוּרִי is usually taken, I think rightly, to come from שׁוּר I, to be even or level, giving the meaning “I have made level” (as with the ground, in Isa 28,25; and perhaps of quieting mental disturbance at Isa 38,13, though the text and meaning of that verse are very uncertain), or “I have calmed.” Jerome (*proposui*) seemingly took it from שׁוּר II = “to set or place”, as did Kimhi, who rendered it by the verb שׁוּם⁽¹⁹⁾, but this is less satisfactory. Emendations such as שׁוּרִי I have cried out [cf Ps 30,3 (EVV 30,2)], or שׁוּרִי I have bowed down [cf Ps 38,7] (Cheyne), are unnecessary. LXX and Peshitta (I humbled) and Vulgate (*humiliter sentiebam*, I felt humble) probably have the MT reading, and take the verb to be שׁוּר I.

It should be noted, however, that שׁוּר I can also mean “to resemble” (cf 2 Sam 22,34; Ps 18,34 [EVV 18,33]; Prov 26,4; Dan 5,21), and was taken so here by Symmachus (ἐξίσωσα). We shall return to this point.

Loretz⁽²⁰⁾ believes that a noun (perhaps לבִּי) has fallen out after שׁוּרִי. This is an attractive suggestion, since it would give a more regular structure to the Psalm, or at least to vv. 1-2, which would consist of four bicola, each displaying parallelism:

- 1b *O LORD, my heart is not haughty,
my eyes are not lifted up.*
- 1c *I have not occupied myself with great matters,
with things too wondrous for me.*
- 2a *I have indeed (?) calmed (?) [? my heart]
and I have quieted (?) my soul.*
- 2b *Like a weaned child on its mother;
like a weaned child is my soul to me.*

His understanding of 2b is doubtful, but otherwise the analysis is attractive. I am not persuaded, however, that he is right to emend. The fact that an emendation produces a more regular structure is not conclusive. How do we know that the Hebrew Psalmists operated with strict rules about such things? The text of many of the Psalms

⁽¹⁸⁾ BEYERLIN, *Wider die Hybris*, 33-35, 61.

⁽¹⁹⁾ KIMHI, *Psalms CXX-CL*, 40-41.

⁽²⁰⁾ O. LORETZ, “Zur Parallelität zwischen KTU 1.6 1128-30 und Ps. 131,2b”, *UF* 17 (1986) 183-187, 185.

that has come down to us must suggest otherwise. It might have been better to write Loretz' version of 2a; but that does not mean that that is what the Psalmist wrote. I think that the Psalm does use parallelism, but that 2a is an imperfect bicolon (or a colon with internal parallelism).

V. 2a. וְדוּמְמָתִי is supposedly a *polal* form from דָּמָה I = be silent, quiet. So Jerome: *silere feci*. Peshitta does not seem to have anything corresponding to it. LXX and Vulgate have *I have exalted*, which presumably translates דָּמָתִי (found in a few Hebrew manuscripts). This seems likely to be a misreading. de Boer thinks that this took place because וְעָלִי אִמּוֹ was taken to mean (rightly, he supposes) *against* its mother⁽²¹⁾. The MT reading is doubtless correct: the Psalmist speaks of his passive self-abandonment to God.

Crow wonders whether the author has chosen the verb דָּמָה because of its similarity to דָּמָה, "to resemble", a synonym in one of its senses of the verb שָׁוָה. (Symmachus indeed renders it ὁμοιωσα). Crow suggests that the Psalmist is punning, using two verbs to express calming or quietening which coincidentally suggest the idea of comparison, by way of introducing the simile of the weaned child⁽²²⁾. This seems quite plausible. We may therefore perhaps translate: "I have made my נַפֶּשׁ like something calm, like something quiet."

נַפֶּשׁ. It is now widely accepted that נַפֶּשׁ (like the Ugaritic *npš* [as in *npš mt*, the maw/gorge of Death]) sometimes means neck, throat, gullet, appetite or breathing/speaking apparatus (the meaning of the root being to breathe). KB recognize a number of instances, including several in the Psalter: 44,26; 63,6; 107,9,18; 119,25; 143,6. Dahood identifies still other occurrences, including Pss 7,3; 27,12 and 41,3. No one, however, finds the idea in Ps 131,2, yet this is surely one of the cases where the word נַפֶּשׁ carries *some* of the connotation of "throat". The Psalmist, having previously been raucous, has now abated his complaining. Thus, as with לֵב and עֵינַי there is an element of *synecdoche* about the use of נַפֶּשׁ. I suggest further that something of the same sort is found in the preceding Psalm: when he says that his נַפֶּשׁ has waited for YHWH, that it <hopes> in his Master, Ps 130,5-6, the Psalmist is picking up the

⁽²¹⁾ DE BOER, "Psalm CXXXI 2", 289-290.

⁽²²⁾ CROW, *Songs of Ascent*, 96.

appeal in v. 2 to the divine Master to hear his *voice* and the *sound* of his pleading. Similarly in Ps 62,2.6 [EVV 62,1.5], quoted above, **אך אל־אלהים דומי נפשי** and **אך לאלהים דומי נפשי** may carry connotations of making a silent cry to God.

If the **נפש** were identical with the “T”, as is commonly supposed, how could a relationship between the two be envisaged, even an “imaginary” one, as predicated by Beyerlin⁽²³⁾? Beyerlin rightly draws a parallel between our Psalm and Ps 42-43 (a single Psalm originally), where the Psalmist addresses his **נפש** and calls upon it to wait in hope for YHWH (the same verb as we have in 131,3). He does not, however, acknowledge how appropriately connotations of “throat” can be predicated of the word **נפש** in that Psalm: it yearns and thirsts for God like a hart for waters (42,2-3).

The accentuation, with the word **נפש** carrying the accent *‘ôlè w’yôred*, has a pause after 2a. Quell, in the light of this, argues for taking 2a with verse 1. He contends that the metre also favours this, vv. 1-2a consisting of three phrases in 2+2 metre (**ידוד** being excluded from the calculation, being in anacrusis), followed by 3+3 in 2b⁽²⁴⁾. Metrical calculations are, of course, somewhat speculative⁽²⁵⁾. Further, the ancient Rabbis also indicate a pause after **שירי** in 2aα, witness the presence of the disjunctive accent *‘azla l’garmeh* (similarly with the accent *shalshleth magnum* after **הלכתי** in 1c), which Quell ignores since it would not help his case. The accentuation in fact of v. 2 is perfectly consistent with its being taken as a unit⁽²⁶⁾.

⁽²³⁾ BEYERLIN, *Wider die Hybris*, 32.

⁽²⁴⁾ QUELL, “Struktur und Sinn des Psalms 131”, 177.

⁽²⁵⁾ The first two verses are analysed *inter alia* in the following ways:

v. 1 Gunkel: 3+3 (2); 3+2 (3); Schmidt 3+3; 3+2; Allen 3+3; 3+2; Dahood 3+3; 3+3; Kraus 3+3; 3+2. (All include the tetragrammaton). BEYERLIN, who omits the tetragrammaton from the calculation, has 3+3+5.

v. 2 Gunkel: 4; 3+3; Schmidt: 4+3; 3; Allen: 2+3; 3+3; Dahood: 3+3; 3+3; Kraus 4; 3+3; Beyerlin: 4; 3+3.

⁽²⁶⁾ First the verse is divided into two in accordance with the parallelism, the first colon ending in an *‘ôlè w’yôred*, the second with a *silluq*. Each colon is then subdivided, in accordance with internal parallelism, the first half-colon ending in a disjunctive accent, the *‘azla’ l’garmeh* and the *‘athnach* respectively. The verse seems to be perfectly regular judged by the rules identified by W. WICKES, **שעמי אמר**. *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the three so-called Poetical Books of the Old Testament, Psalms, Proverbs and Job* (Oxford 1881).

V. 2bα. כְּנִמַּל עָלַי אִמִּי גַמֹּל means, among other things (e.g. to ripen), something like “to deal fully or adequately with” (BDB). When babies are in question (as in Hos 1,8 and Isa 11,8 and 28,9) the procedure indicated is commonly taken to be weaning. P. de Boer, however, thinks it improbable that עָלַי here means “on”: a local sense “occurs nearly always in connection with places, rivers and the like”. When גַּמֹּל is followed by עָלַי, the sense is “to do something to another person, to deal with someone, to give him what is coming to him, in *malam et bonam partem*.” He therefore translates 2b “just as one does with his mother, thus I have made myself content.” He supposes that the Psalmist is referring to a proverb, and he notes a Sumerian saying: “Accept your lot, and make your mother happy; do it quickly and make your god happy”⁽²⁷⁾. I find this distinctly unconvincing: not only, as de Boer acknowledges, is one’s mother seldom in the OT a person to care for, but his translation would surely require emendation. Nevertheless, de Boer has, I suspect, put us on the track of the correct understanding of 2b (see below).

VanGemerén argues that “the word *gamul* can also mean contented...the essential picture is that of contentment regardless of the age”. Thus in Isa 28,9 גַּמֹּלִי מִחֶלֶב will mean “satisfied with milk”, whether of sucklings who have just been satisfied with their mothers’ milk or of children who have been weaned off it. In 1 Kgs 11,20 the meaning may be that Genubah’s mother brought him up or adopted, rather than weaned, him in the house of the pharaoh (cf LXX ἐξέθρεψεν). In Isa 11,8 we read of the גַּמֹּל who puts his hand in the viper’s nest, after reference to the suckling who plays near the hole of the cobra. It is not clear, VanGemerén says, whether the two words are virtually synonyms indicating very young children, or whether the גַּמֹּל is distinguished from the suckling as a slightly older child who has been weaned. The meaning “satisfied” or “contented” fits well, he argues, for Hebrew proper names such as Gamul, Gamaliel and Gemalli (and Accadian names such as Gamal-ilim and Gamal-Shamash). He therefore translates v. 2 “Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul; like a contented/satisfied child (suckling or infant) upon (by) his mother”⁽²⁸⁾. VanGemerén may or may not be right to be suspicious of taking גַּמֹּשֹׁל to mean “weaned”

⁽²⁷⁾ DE BOER, “Psalm CXXXI 2”, 290-293.

⁽²⁸⁾ W.A. VANGEMEREN, “Psalm 131:2 — *k’gamul*. The Problem of Meaning and Metaphor”, *Hebrew Studies* 23 (1982) 51-57, 52-56.

in some of the texts quoted, but, as we shall see, his approach does not help us much with the troublesome 2bβ, כְּגִמְלָה עַל־נֶפֶשׁ.

The ancient versions are at one in taking the first גִּמְלָה to mean a weaned child, and I think we should follow them. 2bα will surely mean "like a weaned child on its mother". That toddlers were carried on a parent's shoulders is attested by b. Hag 5b-6a (cf *ANEP* 49). It is true that עַל with a person seldom means "on"; it tends to carry a connotation of the burdensome or the oppressive⁽²⁹⁾. But we have a close parallel to the situation envisaged in our text at Isa 49,22, "they will bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters will be carried on (עַל) their shoulders". But why does the Psalmist specify a weaned child rather than a baby? Children were weaned late (as late as three years, in 2 Macc 7,27); the idea may therefore be, as Anderson supposes, that before weaning they got increasingly restless as their mothers found it more and more difficult to satisfy their appetites. A newly weaned child is, therefore, likely to have recently ceased to be raucous, and thus provides the writer with an apt image for his own attainment of quiet contentment⁽³⁰⁾. The image of the weaned child thus follows well upon the claim that the Psalmist has calmed and silenced his נֶפֶשׁ.

Is there any suggestion here of a maternal side to the deity? Does the Psalmist imagine himself as snuggling up to God? The mention here of the mother rather than the father of the child may have been suggested simply by the idea of weaning. On the other hand, maternal affection (or, to speak more accurately, an affection that is more than maternal) is certainly ascribed to God on occasion in the Old Testament⁽³¹⁾, so it may well be implied here too.

V. 2bβ. כְּגִמְלָה עַל־נֶפֶשׁ. These words have been the despair of translators and commentators. Most of them fail to translate the article, but this is defensible if it is taken as referring back to the first גִּמְלָה⁽³²⁾. The Peshitta renders them, "and like a weaned child, so

⁽²⁹⁾ e.g. at Gen 33,13; Num 11,13; Isa 1,14; Job 7,20.

⁽³⁰⁾ In 1 Sam 1,22, Hannah says that she will take the child Samuel up to the shrine at Shiloh after he has been weaned. Is it possible that this story has influenced our Psalmist?

⁽³¹⁾ As at Isa 49,15; perhaps also Ps 22,10,11 and Jer 31,22; cf too Ps 27,10, where the Psalmist professes himself surer of a good reception by God than by his parents.

⁽³²⁾ As in Hab 3,8 (הַבְּנֵהרִים...בְּנֵהרִים): F. DELITZSCH, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms*, vol. III, tr. D. Eaton (London 1889) 303. Delitzsch suggests

was my soul to me", which would surely require כן. "To me" is a possible rendering of עלי, though על in this sense (= in my eyes: Rashi) is a post-exilic usage (BDB, על 8)⁽³³⁾. RV has *my soul is with me like a weaned child*; NEB and REB *as a weaned child clinging to me* (they delete the words, though); RSV *like a child that is quieted is my soul*, which omits עלי and mistranslates גמל⁽³⁴⁾. NRSV *my soul is like the weaned child that is with me* would make sense only if (as suggested by Quell and Seybold) spoken by a worshipper carrying a child⁽³⁵⁾. I find it hard to believe that a poem would have found its way into the Psalter if it could have been sung only by a minority of the congregation. JB and NJB, as is their wont, translate creatively, unconstrained by the actual Hebrew text: *as content as a child that has been weaned and like a little child, so I keep myself*. The New Latin Psalter has *Sicut parvulus, ita in me est anima mea*, which mistranslates גמל and has a dubious rendering of עלי. The translation of על as "within" was already rejected by BDB as "incorrect". Some take עלי as "within me" at Pss 42,5; 142,4 and 143,4, but very questionably⁽³⁶⁾.

VanGemerén, taking גמל, as we have seen, to mean contented rather than weaned, comes up with the translation "So is my soul contented/satisfied within me"⁽³⁷⁾. This seems to me unsatisfactory on several counts: he is taking כ as if it were כן; he is ignoring the gender of נפש, which would require גמולה; he is taking no account of the article with גמל; and he is taking על in a doubtful sense.

Loretz, as we have seen, takes v. 2 to mean *Like a weaned child on its mother; like a weaned child is my soul to me*. He finds here

another reason: the absence of a "collateral definition", as in Deut 32,2 and Isa 41,2 (? the idiom noted at GKC 126q).

⁽³³⁾ "By writers of the silver age, it is sometimes used with the force of a dative." [e.g. 1 Chr 13,2] Beyerlin so understands it in both cola, noting that this interpretation fits well with the common opinion that the Psalm is "very late": BEYERLIN, *Wider die Hybris*, 27 n.33.

⁽³⁴⁾ Unless Vangemerén is right about the semantic range of גמל.

⁽³⁵⁾ They think in terms of a mother, but it is not clear why. The Mishnah (Hag 1.1) and the Talmud (Hag 6a) speak of a child being carried on the shoulders of his father. If v. 2 referred to a child being carried, would it not be more natural to take it thus: "Like a weaned child carried by its mother, nay like the child that I, its father, am now carrying"?

⁽³⁶⁾ See BEYERLIN, *Wider die Hybris*, 25 and n.17.

⁽³⁷⁾ *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 5: Psalms – Song of Songs (ed. W.A. VANGEMEREN) (Grand Rapids 1976) 56.

the *parallelismus membrorum* that he detects throughout vv. 1-2. He further⁽³⁸⁾ finds a formal parallel to Ugaritic usage, as in the tricolon *As is the heart of the cow to its calf/ As is the heart of the ewe to its lamb/ So [literally, As] is the heart of Anat after Baal* (KTU 1.6 II 28-30). Loretz takes the Psalmist to be using repetition for emphasis, in conformity to long established linguistic usage. He may be right, but if so the Masoretes were presumably in error in pointing the second כּנַמַל in the way that they did. Moreover, Loretz' interpretation entails taking עַל in a different sense in the two cola.

Dahood re-points עָלִי as עָלִי which, he says, "parses as the Phoenician third-person suffix" (in Isa 52,14, he similarly amends the text, from עֲלִיךָ to כִּי עָלִי) and translates "Like an infant with him is my soul". This seems somewhat contrived.

Some of the ancient versions take the verb גַּמַל in 2bβ to mean, as it often does, "to recompense": LXX ὥς ἀνταπόδοσις [*al. ἕως ἀνταποδώσεις*] ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν μου; Symmachus οὕτως ἀνταποδοθεῖη τῇ ψυχῇ μου; Vulgate *ita retributio in anima mea*; Syrohexaplar "so you did recompense me". Unfortunately, they do not manage to get a satisfactory sense out of the Hebrew text, partly because they take אִם-לֹא to mean "if not." Thus LXX and Vulgate take the Psalmist to say, "If I have not been humble but have exalted [רַמַמְחִי] my soul, then, just as a weaned child is to its mother [i.e. a nuisance?], so let retribution come upon my soul"⁽³⁹⁾. This is unconvincing, not least because it depends on the reading רַמַמְחִי, which would have been less likely to suffer corruption than the better attested דַמַמְחִי, and it would require emendation to כֵן גַמַל. It does, though, point us in the right direction, namely to taking עַל closely with גַמַל. I suggest that we need to make a minimal textual emendation and read כִי תַגַמַל עָלִי נַפְשִׁי (which may well be what the Syrohexaplar is translating) in the sense "surely you have dealt kindly with me"⁽⁴⁰⁾. The Psalmist is deliberately using the verb גַמַל

⁽³⁸⁾ Following BEYERLIN, *Wider die Hybris*, 50, n.11.

⁽³⁹⁾ LXX and Vulgate could be reading the noun גַמַל: cf C.A. BRIGGS, *The Book of Psalms*. Vol. II (ICC; Edinburgh 1907) 467: "so is bountiful dealing unto my soul"; he oddly, however, says that LXX, Vulgate and Symmachus seem to presuppose the infinitive construct form גַמַל. Symmachus makes quite good sense: "If I have not assimilated and likened my soul to a child that has been weaned to its mother, thus let retribution be given to my soul". It would require, however, emendation of the consonantal text as well as of the pointing.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Alternatively we can follow Mowinckel, Schmidt and Kraus in reading a niph'al form, תַגַמַל. (An excellent suggestion, says H. GUNKEL, *Die Psalmen*.

and the noun נפש in two different senses: "Surely I have calmed and quieted my voice/breathing apparatus like a weaned child on its mother's shoulder. Surely you have dealt kindly with me"⁽⁴¹⁾. The pun cannot readily be rendered in English, though we could perhaps translate גמל as "toddler" and תגמל (rather less felicitously) as "coddled".

As noted above, de Boer has drawn attention to a text in 2 Chronicles (32,25) where we find not only the idiom גמל על used in this sense, but also the verb גבה used of לב: Hezekiah, being a proud man (גבה לבר) was not grateful for the good done to him (גמל עליי). The closeness of the two texts makes it likely, I would suggest, that the Chronicler was aware of, and was deliberately recalling, Ps 131. His familiarity with the preceding and the following Psalm is evident from 2 Chr 6,40-42, where Solomon is made to echo them. My suspicion that גמל על is being used in our text in the sense claimed is confirmed by the striking parallel with Ps 116,7 שרבי נפשי למנוחכי שרבי נפשי למנוחכי, "Return, O my soul, to your rest, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you." (NRSV)

It is time to return to the question of whether 2b goes with 2a, or whether it marks a new statement. On the whole, I think it goes with both what precedes and what follows. The Psalmist notes that he has quieted his complaints, and proceeds in v. 3 to encourage his fellow-Israelites similarly to trust in YHWH. 2b does, though, build on what has gone before: although 2a has not directly used maternal imagery, it has spoken of calming the נפש, using verbs which suggest assimilation with something shortly to be identified.

V. 3. Skehan among others has noted connections with the previous Psalm. In Ps 130,7 [EVV 130,6] the phrase found at 131,3 occurs: יחל ישראל אל-יחודה; both Psalms also speak of נפשי (130,5,6; 131,2 [bis]). Further, in both Psalms the writer adopts a lowly pose; and both Psalms are, as Dahood notes, bipartite: beginning with an

4. Auflage (HAT, II.2; Göttingen 1925) 564.) Kisseene proposes כן גמל, "so is my soul weaned in me," ignoring the gender of נפש: E.J. KISSENE, *The Book of Psalms*. Vol. II (Dublin 1954) 269.

(⁴¹) LXX clearly realized that the word גמל is used in two different senses. Crow, although he identifies a pun in the words שרה and דמם, oddly declines to find one in גמל, on the ground that the two occurrences come so close to each other.

address to YHWH and ending with a call to the congregation. Presumably the redactors have deliberately placed our present Psalm after one which speaks of hope and waiting⁽⁴²⁾.

Some commentators, as we have said before, treat v. 3 as a redactional addition. If the Psalm was originally a purely personal poem, this is possible. If, however, it was designed to be sung by the King, an invitation to the congregation to follow the singer's example of trust would have been very appropriate.

A free translation of the text as slightly emended may now be offered:

- 1b *O LORD, my heart is not haughty,
my eyes are not lifted up.*
*I have not occupied myself with great matters,
with things too wondrous for me.*
- 2a *No, I have made like something calm
and like something quiet my heaving breast:*
- 2b *like a toddler on its mother,
surely you have coddled my heaving breast.*
- 3 *Await in hope, O Israel, for the LORD,
from now and for evermore.*

II. Literary Form and *Sitz im Leben*

Was the Psalm written as a unity? Was it cobbled together from fragments of devotional poetry deposited in the Temple and subsequently worked up into a song for congregational use? Was it (or part of it) designed for use at the Temple gates by a female worshipper with a child on her shoulder? Was it sung by the King? It is hard to say, particularly since some of these life-situations are somewhat hypothetical: we do not know whether things were deposited in the Temple (like petitions on a present-day prayer-board at the back of a church?) We do not know whether things were ever written to be used specifically by women worshippers. We do not even know for certain whether some Psalms were proclaimed by the King, though this at least is very likely.

If I had to take up a position on these matters, I should opt for taking Ps 131 as a Royal Psalm. As Crow has noted, it is plausible

⁽⁴²⁾ Beaucamp, indeed, sees 131 as "perhaps an appendix" to Ps 130: E. BEAUCAMP, *Le Psautier* [tom. 2:] *Ps 73-150* (SB 7; Paris 1979) 255.

to take the denial of *hybris* as a rejection of the arrogance attributed to foreign kings in Isaiah and Ezekiel⁽⁴³⁾. Even if it was not originally a Royal Psalm, it can be argued that Ps 131 became one when לָדוֹד was added (if it was) to the superscription. The Psalm in its final form serves as a warning that kings should not be proud but should place all their trust in their divine Master and call upon their subjects to do likewise⁽⁴⁴⁾.

But is our Psalm early enough to be a Royal Psalm? Many commentators admittedly suppose it to be post-exilic, but this is little more than surmise⁽⁴⁵⁾. Some of the Psalms of Ascent (but not this one) have unusual lexical features, such as the use of ׀, which may be late; on the other hand, they may be archaisms or survivals. (׀ is found in one of the very earliest passages of the Hebrew Bible, the Song of Deborah: Judg 5,7 [*bis*]⁽⁴⁶⁾). Beyerlin and Crow both treat the Psalm as post-exilic. Beyerlin⁽⁴⁷⁾ posits a connection with the Wisdom movement, seeing a significant parallel with Job 42,2-6, where Job says that he has learnt his lesson and will henceforth forswear speaking of גַּפְלֵאוֹת. Not only is the thinking comparable,

⁽⁴³⁾ CROW, *Songs of Ascent*, 97. See Isa 14-19; 23; Ezek 26-28.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Kimhi, following Numbers Rabbah (IV. 20), finds allusions to David's own life: his heart was not proud when Samuel anointed him; his eyes were not haughty when he killed Goliath; he did not walk in matters too great for him when he was reinstated; and he eschewed matters too marvellous for him when he brought up the Ark to Jerusalem. KIMHI, *Psalms CXX-CL*, 42-43.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ So, for example, without evidence, BRIGGS, *Psalms*, II, 466: "the Ps is doubtless one of the late Greek period"; and ANDERSON, *Psalms*, II, 878: "The date of the Psalm may well be post-Exilic". If עָלַי means (as Peshitta and Rashi, among others, including BEYERLIN, suppose) "to me", it will point to a post-exilic date; but such an interpretation is improbable.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ On the Judges text, Moore wrote many years ago: "The rel. ׀ is frequent in late BH, and in MH supplants אֲשֶׁר altogether; but it is unsafe to infer that it was of late origin...We have equally little ground for pronouncing ׀ a peculiarity of a northern dialect. The relatives אֲשֶׁר and ׀ are probably of different origin, and may have existed side by side in all periods of the language": G.F. MOORE, *Judges* (ICC; Edinburgh 1895) 144-145. More recently Dahood has also protested at the view that ׀ "as a relative pronoun [is] limited to late Hebrew and passages with North Palestinian colouring...The Ugaritic personal name šb'l...can well be interpreted 'the One of Baal', in which šu is the relative pronoun": M. DAHOOD, *Psalms III (101-150)* (AB 17A; New York 1970) III, 251-252. Soggin at one time suggested the possibility of taking שְׁקַמְרִי in Judg 5,7 as 'an ancient causative in š- (the šafel form)': J.A. SOGGIN, *Judges* (OTL; London 1981) 86.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ BEYERLIN, *Wider die Hybris*, 76-80.

he says, but the Job passage is form-critically similar to a divine oracle or to a Certainty of a Hearing section in a Psalm of Individual Lament or Confidence, such as our present Psalm is. I am not persuaded by the argument. A similarity between Job 42,2-6 (and other parts of that book) and the Psalms of Individual Lament is evident enough, but what does it prove? Surely not that any individual Psalm of Lament (or, for that matter, any Jeremianic Confession) comes from the same period as the Book of Job. If a direct influence needs to be posited in respect of Ps 131 and Job 42, the Psalm could surely have influenced the author of Job rather than the reverse. But why need such a connection be made? Talk of God's נפלאות is not confined to Wisdom texts: it is found in both prophetic⁽⁴⁸⁾ and historical⁽⁴⁹⁾ texts.

Was the Psalm written as it now stands, as a unity? It is hard to be certain, but the arguments urged against this supposition do not convince me. The main problem is that whereas verse 1 is addressed to YHWH, verse 3 is addressed to Israel. Should we regard either the Tetragrammaton in v. 1 or the whole of v. 3 as redactional? Let us examine the arguments. I take the case of v.1 first. It is possible to argue that the ancient Rabbis found the word ידוה here problematic on the basis of the "Note-line" that follows it. This line is usually taken as the sign *l'garmeh*, part of the accent *m'huppak l'garmeh*, which has a disjunctive force. This, though, tends to show, at most, that the Rabbis took the divine name to constitute an anacrusis. Kennedy, however, believes that there is no distinction between *paseq* and *l'garmeh*. He thinks, *pace* Wickes, that the "Note-line" antedates the accentual system. The Masoretes, "viewing 'Paseq' as if it were really a mark occasionally inserted to separate words in a sentence, adopted their accentual arrangements in accordance with this erroneous idea, as they deemed best in every passage where it occurred"⁽⁵⁰⁾. There are fifteen different reasons for the insertion of the *paseq*, and both the occurrences in Ps 131,1 are instances of the fifteenth, namely to question the originality of the word that precedes it⁽⁵¹⁾. If Kennedy is right, the ancient copyists will have regarded ידוה and הלכתי as incorrect readings. It is difficult,

⁽⁴⁸⁾ see Mic 7,15.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ see Exod 3,20; Josh 3,5; 1 Chr 16,12,24.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ J. KENNEDY, *The Note-line in the Hebrew Scriptures commonly called Paseq, or Pesiq* (Edinburgh 1903) 11.

⁽⁵¹⁾ KENNEDY, *Note-line*, 78,90.

I think, to see why they should have thought this of יְהוָה, unless of course they anticipated some modern scholars in supposing that a Psalm that ended by addressing the people could not have begun by addressing the deity. Even if this view should have such early backing, however, I remain unconvinced that the reading יְהוָה is wrong.

Nor am I persuaded by form-critical arguments that something has fallen out after יְהוָה. Crow, as noted earlier, maintains that there must be a petition missing:

With the vocative, "O YHWH" at the beginning, one naturally expects that a petition will follow. This is reinforced by the "negative confession" of v. 1, the purpose of which is normally to provide the grounds for divine action on the supplicant's behalf⁽⁵²⁾.

As for the initial address, it is true that it is hard to find an example of a Psalm where it is not followed by a request⁽⁵³⁾ or an expression of thanks⁽⁵⁴⁾. But it seems hard to rule that an ancient Jewish writer who wanted to express his confidence in God had always to refer to him in the third person. It seems unlikely that there were hard and fast rules about such things. Similarly with what Crow calls the negative confession: although the common context of protesting one's innocence was to plead for help⁽⁵⁵⁾, it is readily conceivable that an author should have wanted on occasion to tell God that after a struggle with self-will he had achieved a calm and humble confidence in him. Indeed, I think that Ps 130 (which with Volz and Weiser I take as a Psalm of Thanksgiving⁽⁵⁶⁾) we have a good parallel: in v. 1 he reminds YHWH that he has in the past thrown himself upon his mercy, using the plea spelt out in vv. 2b-6. He implies that his appeal had been successful, and proceeds in vv. 7-8 to urge others to follow suit. If this is right, the temptation to excise verse 3 of our Psalm should also be resisted. It forms the natural culmination to the Psalm: the Psalmist's gratitude to God for the peace of mind he has achieved leads him naturally to call on

⁽⁵²⁾ CROW, *Songs of Ascent*, 97.

⁽⁵³⁾ as in Ps 22.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ as in Ps 18.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ e.g. Ps 26,1 "Give me justice, O LORD, for I have lived my life without reproach, and put my unflinching trust in the LORD"; cf 17,1; 44:18 [EVV 44,17].

⁽⁵⁶⁾ קְרָאֵהוּ in v. 1 in that case is a genuine past tense, as in LXX and Vulgate.

others to place their trust in him too. In Ps 62, we find the same situation in reverse: in vv. 1-11, the Psalmist tells the people that he has committed his silent trust to the LORD, and he calls on them to do likewise; then in v. 12 he addresses the LORD.

What is clear above all is that the language of this, as of most other Psalms, is sufficiently general for all to be able to identify with its sentiments and make it their own. That is the beauty of the Psalms: although they for the most part clearly spring from deep personal experience, the language in which they are clothed is so chosen as to make them suitable for use by all sorts and conditions of men and women.

As is widely known, there is no scholarly consensus on the significance of the word מעלות (steps, ascents, extolments?) in the designation of Psalms 120-134 as שיר המעלות; nor are scholars agreed on the reason for these Psalms being described in this way. The majority view is that the term characterizes these Psalms as in some sense pilgrimage songs. It is widely accepted, however, to be unlikely that they were all originally composed as such. This particular Psalm was probably not in the first instance created to be sung by pilgrims. As for the phrase עלי אמו, "it seems...likely that the metaphor is used as a metaphor, with no factual connection to the speaker"⁽⁵⁷⁾. Nevertheless, the Psalm works quite well as a member of a collection of pilgrimage songs. Fyall has written: "The Psalter expresses the emotions and feelings of the pilgrim people of God and, though rooted in particular times and places, speaks to pilgrims in circumstances far removed from those who originally wrote and sang these songs"⁽⁵⁸⁾. What this particular poem expresses is the conviction that the true pilgrim must travel in humility, hoping and trusting in God, and is inviting others to do the same: in v. 3, "the confidence in the LORD of one pilgrim is offered to the company of pilgrims"⁽⁵⁹⁾.

What has this Psalm to say in particular to those who read it as part of the Christian Bible? From the start Christians have drawn inspiration from the study and recitation of the Psalms. Athanasius, in *To Marcellinus on the Interpretation of the Psalms*, waxed lyrical on the subject:

⁽⁵⁷⁾ CROW, *Songs of Ascent*, 98.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ R.S. FYALL, *Travelling Hopefully: A Spiritual Pilgrimage* (London 1996) 50.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ J.L. MAYS, *Psalms* (Louisville 1994) 408.

All of our scripture, old and new, is divinely inspired...But the Book of Psalms has a special claim on our attention...since it is like a paradise garden containing all the fruits of Scripture and expressing them in song, making them its own...It seems to me that those who sing the Psalms are furnished with a mirror in which to contemplate themselves and their own feelings and to give expression to these feelings⁽⁶⁰⁾.

As for Psalm 131 in particular, the Fathers aptly illustrate its teaching (which is summarized by Hilary as that "humility is the greatest work of our faith"⁽⁶¹⁾) from the New Testament. Thus Athanasius and John Chrysostom link it with the Gospel call in Matt 18,3 to become like little children⁽⁶²⁾. Cassiodorus gives examples from the New Testament of haughty eyes (the rich man who destroys his barns), of walking in great matters (Pilate), and of walking in matters too wondrous (Simon Magus). He also notes that Paul's advice in Rom 11,20 not to be proud but to stand in awe chimes in with the teaching of the Psalmist⁽⁶³⁾. For the Christian, the model for such humility must, of course, be the one who is represented as having said, "'Learn of me, for I am gentle and humble of heart'" (Matt 11,29).

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SUMMARY

Psalm 131 displays a subtle play on words. The psalmist has silenced and calmed down his soul/breast (he has put an end to its loud complaints). The two verbs used express or suggest the idea of assimilation ('I have transformed it into something silent and something calm'), which leads up to the material image which follows. In 2b *gamul* means a child that has been weaned or is happy (and has stopped crying loudly); instead of *kaggamul* one should read *tiggmol*, 'you have been nice to me'. Although the psalm has an unusual form, it has the same structure as Psalm 130. It probably constitutes a literary unit. It may be royal psalm.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ PG 27:12,24.

⁽⁶¹⁾ PL 9:725.

⁽⁶²⁾ PG 27:520; 55:378.

⁽⁶³⁾ PG 70:943-4.

The Opening of the Seals (Rev 6,1–8,6)

In 1996 Giancarlo Biguzzi published a remarkable study in Italian on the septets in the structure of the book of Revelations⁽¹⁾. In this work, the four evident series of “seven” are investigated: letters, seals, trumpets and bowls, the last three in much more detail. As the subtitle indicates, a history of the exegesis is provided, the texts are analyzed and their interpretation is offered. The problem of the connection between seals, trumpets and bowls is carefully examined. Biguzzi asks whether one can speak of progression and climax, or rather should choose between recapitulation and an encompassing technique. Moreover, the question is asked what these terms exactly mean.

Biguzzi’s thorough acquaintance with the scholarly literature on Revelation is admirable. With great perspicacity and an astounding familiarity with earlier interpretations as well as modern research, Biguzzi composes his surveys and thereafter presents his own well-considered views. Not only does he, as is common practice, distinguish between the letters in chapters 1–3 and the other three septets, he also strongly defends the difference between the seals (chs. 4–7) on the one hand and the trumpets and bowls (chs. 8–9 and 15–16) on the other. In the section of the seals the Lamb only “reveals”; in the sections of the trumpets and bowls seven angels “bring about” God’s medicinal punishments and plagues. Rev 4,1–7,17 is a separate section; the passages 7,13–17 and 5,4–5 constitute an inclusion. In 8,1 a different register commences: no longer revelation but action.

The present article will attempt to investigate again, in dialogue with Giancarlo Biguzzi, the “story-line” in chapters 4–8, more specifically in 6,1–8,6⁽²⁾. In the first section the main ingredients of

(¹) G. BIGUZZI, *I settenari nella struttura dell'Apocalisse. Analisi, storia della ricerca, interpretazione* (Suppl. RivB 31; Bologna 1996). See, e.g., the recension by P. Prigent in *Bib* 78 (1997) 294–297.

(²) Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, “A Structuration of Revelation 4,1–22,5”, in J. LAMBRECHT (ed.), *L'Apocalypse johannique et l'Apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament* (BETL 53; Leuven 1980) 77–104. This study tried to “visualize” a great many of the results found in U. VANNI, *La Struttura letteraria*

Biguzzi's position will be explained. The second section will examine his views in a critical way. Finally the hopefully justified insights will be gathered and reflected upon. The reader should bear in mind that only one section of Revelation is dealt with explicitly; other texts are brought into the discussion in so far as they advance the understanding of 6,1-8,6.

I. Biguzzi on Rev 6,1-8,6

Chapters 4-7 of Revelation can be divided into two parts: the Introductory Vision of the Scroll (chs. 4-5) with the One sitting on the throne in chapter 4 and the Lamb taking the scroll sealed with the seven seals in chapter 5; and the First Six Seals (chs. 6-7) with the opening of these seals in chapter 6 and in chapter 7 the pericopes on those sealed on earth (7,1-8), as well as on the great multitude of martyrs in heaven (7,9-17). After the "interruption" of chapter 7 the text continues with the seventh seal, rather mysteriously: "When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour" (8,1).

Specific Views

The Lamb. Biguzzi very much emphasizes that in the opening of the seven seals the Lamb is the unique agent (p. 108-109). The Lamb is the protagonist in chapter 6 and 8,1. In chapter 5 a mighty angel had proclaimed with a loud voice: "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" (v. 2). The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, the one who has conquered is the only one who can open the scroll and its seven seals. The Lamb stands as if it has been slaughtered. The Lamb has seven horns and seven eyes "which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth" (v. 6). The Lamb takes the scroll from the right hand of the one who is seated on the throne. Then follows the liturgy of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders. Their new song is heard: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals ..." (v. 9). This song is more or less repeated by the many angels surrounding the throne: "Worthy

dell'Apocalisse (Aloisiana 8; Rome 1971). For critical discussions of my proposal, see the second and enlarged edition of Vanni's book (Rome 1980) 274-280, and also F.D. MAZZAFERRI, *The Genre of the Book of Revelation from a Source-critical Perspective* (BZNW 54; Berlin 1989) 356-363.

is the Lamb ..." (v. 12). Finally, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth as well as in the sea, and all that is in them, give glory to God and to the Lamb.

After this most solemn inauguration one reads the equally stately beginning of the opening: "Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the living creatures call out, as with a voice of thunder, 'Come!'" (6,1). Four times this scene is more or less repeated and four times a horse and its rider appear. But also for the three remaining seals it is the Lamb who opens them. Biguzzi concludes that the reader cannot but pay attention to the absolutely primary role of the Lamb as unique subject of the action. Moreover, the reader is greatly impressed by the emphasis given to this fact by the author of Revelation⁽³⁾.

A comparison with the trumpets and the bowls underscores the importance of this first remark. In both these series the action is carried out by seven angels; they are numbered and form a group; they are ministers of God and received their task from God (cf. the passive "was given" and, with regard to a command, 9,13-14: "I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, saying to the sixth angel..."). No doubt is possible: because of their number and their lower rank as angels, and also because of the way John introduces them, these protagonists are clearly inferior to the Lamb⁽⁴⁾.

Positive and Negative Description. The introductory formulae in chapter 6 (the seals) are less stereotyped than those of the trumpets and the bowls: see those of the fifth seal (6,9) and the sixth seal (6,12; cf. also 8,1) (p. 105-107). With horse and rider in each seal the first four seals (6,1-8) undoubtedly constitute a quartet. Yet the first seal ends with the clause: (the rider) "came out conquering and to conquer" (6,2); such an execution is not mentioned for the other three riders. As many other commentators, Biguzzi emphasizes the

⁽³⁾ See BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 109: "All'attenzione del lettore ... si impone il ruolo di assoluto primo piano svolto dall'Agnello: egli è non solo soggetto unico nella formula d'introduzione di ogni sigillo, ma a quel ruolo è preconizzato con enfasi unica".

⁽⁴⁾ Not only the number but "si intravede l'inferiorità dei sette angeli tribicini nei confronti dell'Agnello, sia per dignità, che per autorità e ruolo" (BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 113). For the trumpets, cf. 109-110 and 113; for the bowls, cf. 114-115.

positive character of the first rider: white color, the crown, the verb "to conquer" and the parallel 19,11 where the rider is Christ. Although nothing in 6,1-2 points to Christ and the rider should, therefore, not be taken as Christ, the first seal is most probably different from the other three: positive *versus* negative⁽⁵⁾. Furthermore, these first four seals do not point to events which are taking place. In Biguzzi's opinion they are characterized by "non-episodicità e a-istoricità"⁽⁶⁾. The first is not a blessing; the other three are not plagues. By means of them John points to a conflicting and already existing and permanent situation on earth.

The Christian Martyrs. The fifth seal (6,9-11), too, cannot be a plague or a punishment. In a rather unexpected way John speaks here of those who have been slaughtered for the word of God and are already in heaven ("under the altar"). They are the Christian martyrs who have died during the persecution. Biguzzi emphasizes a twofold emergence. It is no longer the Lamb who directs his riders to the earth; no, in the fifth seal the martyrs pray to God. It is no longer an a-historical qualification of contrast; in the fifth seal the time dimensions come to the forefront: the text refers to the past and imminent persecution of the Christians and to the martyrs' prayer for God's judgment and vindication ("how long will it be before...?" 6,10). God's answer is that the number of the fellow servants must be completed first. As can be seen, the fifth seal is very different from the foregoing seals. A thematic progression and a continuous narration are now to be expected⁽⁷⁾.

The End of a Narrative Cycle. According to Biguzzi the content of the sixth seal goes from 6,12 to 7,17 and contains three pericopes (p. 134-146). The first pericope (6,12-17) depicts a cosmic upheaval

(5) BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 121-130. Cf. also, e.g., M. BACHMANN, "Der erste apokalyptische Reiter und die Anlage des letzten Buches der Bibel", *Bib* 67 (1986) 240-275.

(6) BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 130; cf. 147: "L'Autore nei primi quattro sigilli pare dunque interessato a presentare una situazione o condizione continuata e permanente, caratterizzata dalla non-episodicità. In altre parole sembra predisporre una scenografia sul cui sfondo proietterà la vicenda, essa sì fatta di eventi unici, che ha in programma di raccontare".

(7) BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 130-134; cf. the interesting study of J.P. HEIL, "The Fifth Seal (Rev 6,9-11) as a Key to the Book of Revelation", *Bib* 74 (1993) 220-243.

which causes the panic of sinful humankind; it announces the imminent wrath of God and the Lamb: "the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (6,17). Visibly this is already the beginning of the divine answer to the prayers of the martyrs in the preceding seal. The second pericope (7,1-8), however, explains that the actual punishment cannot take place yet; the servants of God must first be marked with a seal. John narrates this sealing; the twelve tribes and the number of people, 144,000, symbolize the whole of Israel, which in this context, no doubt, refers to the Christian church on earth (p. 137-140). The third pericope (6,9-17) is suddenly eschatological: the great multitude represents the same Christian church, but now as triumphant and situated in heaven. A comparison with chapters 21-22 confirms the end-time character of this scene (p. 215).

Together with the fifth seal the whole of history is presented: past, present and future persecution of the church, sealing of the servants, (announced) divine vengeance and punishment, and final salvation⁽⁸⁾. The historical range is even wider than that of trumpets and bowls in chapters 8-16 which deals only with medicinal punishments and plagues⁽⁹⁾. One has to assume that according to John between 7,8 and 7,9 both the medicinal and the final punishments as well as God's victory take place. The expression μετὰ ταῦτα in 7,9 (plural; compare μετὰ τοῦτο in 7,1, singular) appears to suggest that judgments have intervened⁽¹⁰⁾.

In 7,13 one of the elders addresses John and says: "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" This is the start of an informative, interpretative dialogue; the revelation proper has ended at 7,12. Biguzzi compares the dialogue of 7,13-17 with that in 5,4-5, the only two texts where an elder gives explanation to John; they possess a very similar vocabulary, and twice also there is the context of a liturgy. Therefore, the two passages appear to

(8) BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 134: "Mentre l'Autore scrive, la persecuzione è già fatto del passato, e nello stesso tempo è temuta per un futuro imminente. Oltre quel supplemento di persecuzione, infine, si intravedono giudizio e 'vendicazione', e quindi anche premio e ricompensa. Attraverso il tema della persecuzione dunque si innesca nella trama del libro tutto l'arco temporale che va dalla storia contemporanea all'escatologia". See also 148-149.

(9) See the correspondences and differences which are graphically set out in BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 213.

(10) BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 145-146: "... giudizio e vittoria sono da sopporre tra la sigillazione dei 144.000 e la gloria della folla innumerevole" (146).

function as an inclusion; they “frame” the revelation of chapters 6-7 and at the same time they indicate that chapters 4-7 constitute a complete narrative cycle⁽¹¹⁾.

Revelation. Biguzzi does not accept the view that the content of the scroll can only be revealed after the opening of the seventh seal. A comparison with trumpets/bowls, where each blast of a trumpet and each pouring of a bowl is followed by a plague, as well as due attention given to the close grammatical connection of each vision with the opening of the seal, should overcome the so-called “archeological” difficulty. The symbolic world does not always obey the rules of the historical reality, i.e., that a scroll cannot be read before all its seals are broken. No, in Revelation after each opening there is a manifestation of part of the scroll’s content (p. 188-191).

Yet what occurs through the Lamb’s opening of the seals is revelation, not realization. The opening of the book by the Lamb causes visions and auditions of God’s fixed plan of history, of what is and what will be; they are not indications that (in John’s mystical experience) events are already taking place. This can be compared with the beginning of the book: “The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place; he made it known by sending his servant John..” (1,1-2). Biguzzi repeatedly stresses that the series of seals is different from the trumpets and bowls where events really occur. In the seals one remains in the sphere of knowledge, publication, manifestation, prophecy; the realization has not yet begun (see, e.g., p. 191-193 and 310).

The Silence. The opening of the seventh seal (8,1) is decidedly different from the opening of the previous ones. It has already been said that the revelation proper ends at 7,12⁽¹²⁾. The introductory formula in 8,1 contains a ὅταν instead of the six times repeated ὅτε in chapter 6 (vv. 1.3.5.7.9 and 12) and — what is much more

(11) BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 217-220: “... estendendosi dall’interrogativo dell’Angelo Forte su chi sia degno d’aprire il rotolo fino alla sua più esauriente risposta, Ap 4-7 risulta essere un ciclo narrativo completo, e una vera e propria ‘apocalisse’, in se stessa compiuta e autosufficiente” (220).

(12) Cf. BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 221: because of the dialogue in 7,13-17 “... l’apertura del settimo sigillo (8,1) è sorprendentemente e incredibilmente fuori della rivelazione, nonostante che aprire un sigillo di per sé significhi rivelare”.

important — the opening is not immediately followed by a verb of seeing or hearing but by ἐγένετο, which indicates an event⁽¹³⁾. In 8,1 the text reads: “When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour”.

According to Biguzzi, the silence is a time period of intense positive expectation of God’s intervention, just that. One is not permitted to put the content of 8,2-6 into it. The apparition of the seven angels (v. 2), the liturgy of incense and prayer (vv. 3-4), the throwing of the fire on the earth (v. 5), the preparatory activity of the angels (v. 6): all this is in no way simultaneous with the silence and, therefore, not to be placed within the “half hour”. Those events presumably occur after the revelation by the Lamb and also after the period of the expectation (p. 226).

For Biguzzi 8,1 constitutes the vertex, the intersection between the first cycle and what follows, the caesura between revelation and action, between promise and execution, between word and history⁽¹⁴⁾.

Conclusions and Questions

The main conclusions from the above mentioned data can be summarized as follows. (1) Otherwise than in the sections of the trumpets and the bowls, in that of the seals (6,1–8,1) the Lamb is the unique protagonist. In the first six seals the Lamb “reveals” (see p. 214). (2) The series of seals does not contain plagues or punishments. Only the first pericope of the sixth seal announces them. (3) In 6,1–7,12 a survey of the situation in the world, of the history of persecution and of the final vindication of the martyrs is sketched. (4) Chapters 8–22 present a (partial) repetition of what is merely announced in chapters 6–7⁽¹⁵⁾, but in order to call this a

⁽¹³⁾ Cf. BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 221-222: the seventh seal “non parla più di visioni o di audizioni, ma di accadimenti. Dopo l’apertura del settimo sigillo dunque *non* vien detto che Giovanni ‘vede’ o ‘ode’ alchunché, come era dal primo al sesto sigillo, *ma* — solo al settimo — che qualcoso ‘accade’”.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Cf. BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 226: “... il silenzio di 8,1 non è solo un’indimenticabile invenzione letteraria di Giovanni, ma in Ap svolge il ruolo strutturale e strategico di chiave di volta. E vertice narrativo per il ciclo del rotolo, e segna il trapasso tra rivelazione dell’Agnello da una parte e azione di Dio dall’altra, tra promessa ed esaudimento della promessa, tra parola e storia”.

⁽¹⁵⁾ BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 215: “... gli stessi eventi sono narrati due volte ma accadono una volta soltanto...”.

“recapitulation” one has to note, with Biguzzi, that there is first only promise and then in the “recapitulation” execution, thus first prophecy and then action. The classic understanding of recapitulation, on the contrary, assumes a repetition in the narrating of events⁽¹⁶⁾. (5) The seventh seal (8,1) does not encompass the rest of the book. The silence of half an hour possesses its own content, that of eager expectation. (6) Moreover, those who propose an encompassment can hardly explain how an eschatological passage (7,9-17) comes before the pre-eschatological trumpets and bowls⁽¹⁷⁾.

Without any doubt the attention given by Biguzzi to the particular characteristics of the fifth seal, as well as to the “not yet” aspect present in 6,11, 6,12-17 and 7,1 and 3, must be duly recognized. Yet three clusters of critical questions arise. The first cluster concerns the series of seven. Have the seals in Biguzzi’s interpretation after all not become too divergent? This applies not only to the members of the initial quartet, but also to the identity of fifth and sixth seals and, of course, to that of the seventh seal. What of the climax which one is justified to expect at the end of a series of seven? And what about the function of the seventh “open” seal in view of the following series of seven trumpets (and seven bowls)? A second cluster of questions is connected with the concept of “revelation”. By means of the qualification “revelation” Biguzzi opposes seals and trumpets-bowls; for the last two he uses the term “intervention”. That antithesis enables him to declare that the narrative cycle of seals is complete and closed. Yet is the opening of seals no more than simply communication or, perhaps better, can “revelation” in chapters 6–7 be restricted to vision and audition without realization? The third cluster contains questions regarding such matters as the line of thought, the story-line, the progression of the narrative and the linear sequence, all this not only in chapters 4–7 and 8–22 separately, but also in the visionary second part of the book of Revelation as a whole, i.e., chapters 4–22. More specifically, to what degree is 8,1 a break between two so-called independent cycles? These questions, it would seem, necessitate a renewed analysis.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Cf. BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 216: “... si tratta di una ricapitolazione in qualche modo anomala e non del tutto corrispondente alle definizioni classica ... Qui ... c’è prima il racconto prolettico e poi la descrizione degli accadimenti”.

⁽¹⁷⁾ See, e.g., BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 260-261. The Italian term for “encompassing” is “inglobante”; cf. the noun “inglobamento”.

II. Analysis

Some brief preliminary remarks may be helpful in clarifying the way for the subsequent analysis. (1) Often a narrative tells the story of past events. Apocalyptic literature also provides visions of the future. More than once the “seer” begins the report of his vision(s) by first narrating past and contemporaneous facts: the exactitude of their detailed description should increase the credibility of the ensuing prophecies⁽¹⁸⁾. It is not always easy to determine where on the time-line the seer exactly stands. Furthermore, the linear progression of the story can be interrupted by flashbacks, repetitions or anticipations (i.e., proleptic scenes) or even by bringing in foreign materials. In the last case the story-line is as it were doubly interrupted⁽¹⁹⁾. (2) In his dealing with the “woes” in Revelation (see 8,13; 9,12 and 11,14) Biguzzi distinguishes between time-moment and time-duration. The breaking of a seal, the blowing of a trumpet and the pouring of a bowl are actions which need but a moment of time. A “woe”, on the other hand, by its nature points to duration, to a time period (p. 263-264). Since in this article the terms seal, trumpet and bowl are also employed broadly for what occurs after the breaking, blowing or pouring and for what is announced by those actions, the distinction, by itself valid, becomes less significant. (3) It would seem that one should respect as much as possible the logic of the grouping in a series of seven. The sequence within the series may be increasing or simply cumulative, yet the seventh element must have to do with completion or the end, and hence it constitutes a climax. Abstractly and generally speaking, when the trumpets and bowls are punishments, the same should perhaps be supposed with regard to the seals. Or when the first five bowls are plagues, it is probable that the sixth and the seventh will be plagues as well or, at least, will be connected with plagues. The creative liberty of the author, real as it may appear, is not absolute⁽²⁰⁾. (4) Biguzzi devotes

⁽¹⁸⁾ Cf., recently, the remarks by C.R. SMITH, “The Structure of the Book of Revelation in Light of Apocalyptic Literary Conventions”, *NT* 4 (1994) 373-393, 390.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Cf. LAMBRECHT, “Structuration”, 99. For a thorough treatment of narrative terminology, see J.L. SKA, “*Our Fathers Have Told Us*”. *Introduction to the Analysis of Hebrew Narratives* (Subsidia biblica 13; Rome 1990).

⁽²⁰⁾ Yet SMITH, “Structure”, 382, agrees with D.E. AUNE, “The Apocalypse of John and the Problem of Genre”, *Semeia* 36 (1986) 65-86, who emphasizes that an apocalyptic writer often somewhat conceals his message (also by

a brief paragraph to what he calls “a book in the book” (p. 216). By “a book” he means the scroll of chapters 4–7 which finds its place within the book of Revelation. However, the question may be asked whether the revelation of the scroll ends at 7,12. Can it not be argued that all that follows in chapters 8–16 (or even chs. 8–22) is the content of that book in the book?⁽²¹⁾ (5) Biguzzi distinguishes between a “weak” and a “strong” revelation (p. 191-192). The “weak” revelation is only the giving of information. “Weak” revelation makes known and communicates, while “strong” revelation assumes that God’s speaking equals God’s acting (present or future). As has been seen, Biguzzi considers the revelation in 6,1–7,12 as weak. Is this view correct?

Chapter Six

It would seem that not much can be deduced from the small differences within the introductory formulae of the seals: e.g., the presence or absence of εἶδον and/or ἤκουσα, the presence of “as with a voice of thunder” in 6,1”, the ordinal number after or before the noun (seal or living creature), ἄλλος in verse 4 and ὅτε in ch. 6 (over against ὅταν in 8,1)⁽²²⁾. They probably are not more than stylistic variations.

Since the term “plague” is not present in chapter 6 and since, in opposition to both trumpets and bowls, no literary influence from the Exodus plagues manifests itself, it is indeed better not to refer to the seals as “plagues”. Yet by opening the seals the Lamb announces *God’s punishments* for sinful humankind. This may very well also apply to the first seal. Notwithstanding color and terms, as well as the white horse and its rider (Christ) in 19,11-13, in view of the quite strict parallelism between this first and the three other seals of the quartet⁽²³⁾, it is most probable that the irresistible

muddying “structural indicators”, Smith) so that the reader, by decoding it, may participate in the original revelatory experience. For lack of clarity, cf. also R.E. BROWN, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York 1997) 796-797.

(²¹) The identity and function of the “little book” of chapters 10-11 (one more “book in the book”?) are not discussed in this article.

(²²) BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 105-109, 121-149, and M. BACHMANN, “Noch ein Blick auf den ersten apokalyptischen Reiter (von Apk 6.1-2)”, *NTS* 44 (1998) 257-278, esp. 260-265, may be exaggerating the significance of these variations.

(²³) Cf., e.g., recently, H. GIESEN, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (Regensburger NT; Regensburg 1997): “Die ersten vier Visionen weisen durch

conquering power of the rider on the white horse will bring punishment (cf. the bow). Within this context the final clause "and he came out conquering and to conquer" (6,2) hardly adds a significant element in comparison to the other three where a similar clause is absent.

The prayer of the fifth seal, of course, is not a punishment. Yet those who have been slaughtered ask for justice and vengeance; they are told to wait "a little longer", which implies that vengeance will be carried out later. So in its own way the fifth seal announces God's punitive intervention against "the inhabitants of the earth" (6,10) and should therefore not be considered as too great a disturbing factor in the series of punishments.

Twice it is explicitly stated that the catastrophe will *not* be *complete*. There is a restriction. For the famine, see v. 6: "a quart of wheat for a day's pay, and three quarts of barley for a day's pay, but do not damage the olive and the wine"⁽²⁴⁾; for the killing power of Death and Hades, see v. 8: "they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth"⁽²⁵⁾.

From the fifth seal it appears that the actual vengeance has *not yet* taken place: the martyrs are told "to rest a little longer", until the number be complete of both the fellow servants and the brothers and sisters who are soon to be killed as they themselves have been killed (6,11; cf. 7,1-3). Although in the sixth seal the cosmic

einen streng parallelen Aufbau und ihre Motivverwandtschaft eine grosse Geschlossenheit auf" (174); A. KERKESLAGER, "Apollo, Greco-Roman Prophecy, and the Rider on the white Horse in Rev 6:2", *JBL* 112 (1993) 116-121: "... the similarities of form in each of the first four seals imply that the seals must be viewed as a unity made up of parallel members" (116; cf. 117: "a unified group"). However, the identification of the first rider by Kerkeslager as the false messiah is hardly acceptable. See now the remarks by BACHMANN, "Noch ein Blick", 274-276. One may ask, however, whether Bachmann himself does not exaggerate the positive character of the first rider needlessly. What for the addressees of Revelation is positive consists in the avenging of the martyrs' blood "on the inhabitants of the earth" (6,10).

⁽²⁴⁾ Cf. U. VANNI, "Il terzo 'sigillo' dell'Apocalisse (Ap 6,5-6): simbolo dell'ingiustizia sociale?" in IDEM, *L'Apocalisse. Ermeneutica, esegesi e teologia* (Suppl. RivB 17; Bologna 1988) 193-213.

⁽²⁵⁾ Most likely the expression "they were given authority over a fourth of the earth" (6,8) applies to Death and Hades of the fourth seal alone, not to the whole quartet, as the ensuing specification "and to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth" could seem to suggest.

disturbances commence, the punishment of humankind is not yet being carried out. The people flee and hide themselves “from the one seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand” (6,16-17). The day has come; the wrath is imminent! One can conclude from this that the riders of the first four seals are made ready, but that they are not yet active and carrying out their punitive task; they too are waiting (cf. again 7,1-3: the four winds are withheld until the marking of the servants is done).

Chapter 6 contains *more than informative prophecy*. It appears that John is shown the preparation of the imminent punishment. True, the judgment is not yet carried out; the preparation, however, has really begun. This is action, not just publication. The distinction between “weak” and “strong” revelation does not apply here. What is manifested by the prophetic visions after the opening of the seals is not only “word” or “knowledge”, not just a preview, not simply a reading of the book (cf. 5,4), but the commencement of the eschatological event itself. “The opening of the seals does not reveal events; it causes events”⁽²⁶⁾ or, better, the revelation by the Lamb is already an initial realization and enactment.

The *pivotal function of the fifth seal* cannot be denied. In 6,9 John sees those killed during the difficult days of persecution in which he himself lives. One could say that John and his persecuted fellow Christians on earth, like the martyrs in heaven, are asking for God’s intervention. God’s message is that they must wait ἔτι χρόνον μικρόν (6,11)⁽²⁷⁾. Already in the sixth seal that intervention begins: the cosmic upheaval announces God’s final vengeance; there is a

⁽²⁶⁾ R.H. GUNDRY, “Angelomorphic Christology in the Book of Revelation” (*SBL 1994 Seminar Papers* Atlanta 1994) 662-678, 666, n. 15. Would it make much difference for our approach if one does not take each breaking of a seal as a progressive revelation (so Biguzzi) but sees the real opening of the scroll only after the breaking of the seventh seal? See Gundry, *ibid.*: “With the opening of each seal certain events take place, to be sure. But these events does not make up the contents of the scroll, for it is not open for reading of its contents till all seven seals are opened”. Cf. R. BAUCKHAM, *The Climax of Prophecy. Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh 1993) 250: “The progressive opening of the scroll is a literary device which John has created in order to narrate material which prepares us for and is presupposed by the content of the scroll itself”.

⁽²⁷⁾ Cf. 10,6: χρόνος οὐκέτι ἔσται, and 10,7: “... in the days when the seventh angel is to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled...”.

great earthquake and chaos in the whole creation. Because of the close connection between the fifth and sixth seals and because of the temporal sequence, one is justified in considering the first four seals as preparatory operations as well. The riders are made ready for action but not yet acting. The prayer of the martyrs (6,10) takes place, as it were, during the preparation which is depicted in the first four seals (6,1-8). It should be stressed that, notwithstanding the compositional importance of the fifth seal, the eschatological drama already starts with the Lamb's taking of the scroll (5,8) and, more properly, the opening of the first seal (6,1).

Chapter Seven

With the introductory μετὰ τοῦτο εἶδον (7,1) and μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον (7,9) John adds two pericopes in chapter 7. Do these passages in the strict sense belong to the sixth seal or do they constitute intercalations?

Verses 1-8. The content connections of the first pericope with the preceding seals are evident. There is not only the linking expression "after this I saw", but also the fact that the four angels and four winds in verses 1-3 almost certainly remind the reader of the four horses and the four riders in the quartet of chapter 6; all of them are meant for damaging the earth and punishing its inhabitants. Still more important, however, is the fact that the passage provides an explanation why the martyrs in heaven have to wait and rest a little longer (cf. 6,11) and why the wrath itself has not yet broken loose: the servants of God must first be marked with seal.

The number 144,000 and the twelve tribes of Israel symbolize the church on earth, the *ecclesia in via*, it would seem, the church in its completeness. One should, however, pay attention to 14,4 where that same number of servants, now in heaven, is called ἀπαρχή: "they have been redeemed from humankind as 'first fruits' for God and the Lamb" ⁽²⁸⁾. That qualification should perhaps dissuade the reader from

⁽²⁸⁾ The "firstfruits" may be the martyrs. See now D.C. OLSON, "'Those Who Have Not Defiled Themselves with Women': Revelation 14:4 and the Book of Enoch", *CBQ* 59 (1997) 492-510. Olson sees in verse 4a a conscious literary allusion to the Book of Watchers in Enoch (chs. 6-19) which narrates the famous tale of the angelic "sons of God" who defile themselves with the "daughters of men" (cf. Gen 6,1-4). The redeemed 144,000 constitute the church as a "kingdom of priests" replacing the fallen angelic priesthood.

a straightforward identification of the “counted” number with the great multitude that no one could “count” of 7,9.

Notwithstanding its numerous connections with 6,12-17, the passage 7,1-8 most likely does not belong to the sixth seal as such⁽²⁹⁾. Not only does the phrase μετὰ τοῦτο introduce a new vision, different from the preceding one, but the passage contains no punishment. If this view is correct, it follows that John interrupts the Lamb’s action of opening. This does not mean, however, that the story-line is broken. No, the actual “sealing” of the servants must take place before the judgment of the inhabitants of the earth is carried out. The “sealing” precisely clears the way for the expected judgment and vindication.

Verses 9-17. The plural ταῦτα in the phrase μετὰ ταῦτα (7,9) could point to the longer period of time which the marking of the servants demands. Yet one wonders whether the expression μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον in verse 9 is really different in sense from μετὰ τοῦτο εἶδον in 7,1 and whether by it John indicates an extended time⁽³⁰⁾. Perhaps the phrase just introduces another vision.

The pericope 7,9-17 offers a proleptic vision of the final victory of the servants of God: their standing forever before the throne and before the Lamb. The multitude cannot be counted; it is really universal: every nation, all tribes, peoples and languages. Those present have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. They now worship God day and night. They will hunger and thirst no more. The Lamb will guide them to the springs of the water of life; God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. No doubt, the correspondence of this passage with chapters 21–22 regarding both vocabulary and themes confirms its eschatological character⁽³¹⁾. In an anticipatory way John depicts the *ecclesia triumphans*.

⁽²⁹⁾ Just as 10,1–11,13 does not belong to the sixth trumpet (9,13-21) and the second woe (cf. 9,12b and 11,14), so also chapter 7 is not part of the sixth seal.

⁽³⁰⁾ The clause μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον is used by John only two more times, in 15,5 and 18,1. In these passages, too, no specific reference to a longer period is present.

⁽³¹⁾ See BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 144. Five items are mentioned: (1) the verb λατρεύω which occurs only in 7,15 and 22,3; (2) the theme of God’s “sheltering” expressed by means of the verb σκηνόω, present only in 7,15 and 21,3; (3) the removal of all evil expressed by οὐ ... ἔτι in 7,16 and 21,4; (4)

Not only is the reader confronted here at this point with an interruption of the punishment as in 7,1-8, i.e., a shift from seals of judgment to sealing for protection and likewise a shift from the inhabitants of the earth to the servants of God, but the pericope of 7,9-17 also interrupts the linear progression of the story. Suddenly John has a proleptic vision of the eschaton; he introduces the very end of time. According to the logic of his narration a great many things have yet to occur: medicinal punishments, the fall of Babylon, the judgment of the Beast and of the false prophet, the defeat of Satan, the judgment of the dead, the annihilation of Death and Hades, the appearance of the new heaven and earth and of the new Jerusalem. For a moment, as it were, John forgets the story-line and pays attention here to the final enduring celebration.

It would appear that the dialogues of 7,13-17 and 5,4-5 cannot be taken as an inclusion. To be sure, 7,9-17 reminds the reader of chapter 5: the throne, the Lamb, the angels, the elders and the four living creatures, the liturgy and, more specifically, the fact that one of the elders provides an explanation. Yet, as already said, 7,9-17 is strictly eschatological and, therefore, an anticipation of chapters 21-22. Moreover, in no way is 7,9-17 the closing passage of a so-called first revelatory cycle (chs. 4-7). The vision of 7,9-17 and that of 7,1-8 are both interruptions, be it each in its own way. The seventh seal must still come. The story is not yet finished; the narrative has not yet been completed.

The Seventh Seal

Rev 8,1-6 contains a number of seemingly disparate elements. In verse 1 the opening of the seventh seal is mentioned as well as the silence of half an hour which follows that opening. Then, in verse 2, John sees seven angels who stand before God, and also the giving of trumpets to them. Verses 3-5 depict the vision of a liturgy: another angel with a golden censer comes and stands before the altar; a great quantity of incense is given to him to put on the altar, together with the prayers of all the saints. John sees that the smoke of incense with prayers rises before God. After that, the same angel

the themes of "thirst" (7,16) and "water of life" (7,17) which recur together in 21,6 (cf. 21,1); and (5) "God who will wipe away every tear" in 7,17 and 21,4. I defended the non-eschatological character of the passage in "Structuration", 95, n. 48.

fills the censer with fire from the altar and throws it on the earth: "and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake". In verse 6 attention is again given to the seven angels with the trumpets: they prepare themselves to blow the trumpets. The readers of Revelation ask themselves what the content of the seventh seal might be (only silence?) and whether verses 1-6 are somehow interrelated and linked together.

Verse 1. It would seem that both the silence and the duration of it (half an hour) function in the first place as an indication of positive expectation which is full of tension. The mention of such a silence certainly is intended to emphasize the importance of the last seal. God's servants are waiting. Yet does it not mean anything more?

Verse 2. The phrase καὶ εἶδον introduces a complex vision which goes at least to verse 6: the seven angels and their trumpets; the other angel and his double action with the censer; the getting ready of the seven trumpet angels (and perhaps even what follows in chs. 8-9: the blowing of the trumpets). All this is part of the vision, indeed. What is more, there appears to be no valid reason to hold that what is seen occurs only after the silence. No μετὰ τοῦτο or μετὰ ταῦτα is present in verse 2.

One of the reasons for silence in heaven might be precisely that the prayers of the saints (v. 4) could be heard⁽³²⁾. According to such an understanding verses 1-6 are closely connected; together they form a text unit.

Because of the limited time of half an hour, the blowing of the first six trumpets (8,7-9,21) must most probably be seen as taking place after that silence. After all, John may have taken the blowing itself of the trumpets as the breaking of the silence, its unavoidable end and the deafening beginning of the plagues⁽³³⁾.

Verses 3-5. What is narrated about the "other angel" is part of what occurs during the half hour of silence. John now tells how his

⁽³²⁾ Cf., e.g., VANNI, *Struttura*, 123-125 and 222-223; BAUCKHAM, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 71: "At the climax of history, heaven is silent so that the prayers of the saints can be heard, and the final judgment occurs in response to them (v. 5)". See pp. 70-83, where a discussion of this idea in apocalyptic and rabbinic traditions is provided.

⁽³³⁾ According to BROWN, *Introduction*, 788, "the half-hour silence that begins the vision creates a contrast with the trumpet blasts to follow".

vision shows that the prayers of all the saints — not only those of the martyrs in heaven who are mentioned in the fifth seal (6,9-11), but also those of the servants of God still on earth (cf. 7,1-8) — are very pleasing to God. At the same time that vision indicates that these prayers are heard. By throwing the censer now filled with fire on the earth, the angel, in a somewhat proleptic manner, enacts God's "fiery" punishment⁽³⁴⁾. The text is clearly connected with verses 2 and 6 in which the seven punishing angels are mentioned.

Verse 6. There is a progression in time between verses 2 and 6. In verse 2b the seven angels were given their trumpets; in verse 6 they make themselves ready to blow them. The two verses, moreover, constitute an inclusion and "frame" the events of verses 3-5. If the view that καὶ εἶδον of verse 2 introduces the vision which takes place during the silence is correct, then the whole of verses 2-6 "fills" that silence. Because of all this, a further conclusion becomes almost unavoidable: John uses the technique of encompassing. The seventh seal not only leads to but also contains the seven trumpets⁽³⁵⁾.

Data from 11,15-19 and 15,1-16,1. The absence of repentance and conversion referred to in 9,20-21 clearly marks the end of the sixth trumpet. The intercalation of chapters 10,1-11,13 (the open little book and its contents) follows. In 11,14 one reads: "The second woe has passed. The third woe is coming very soon" (cf. 8,13 and 9,12); and in 11,15a: "The seventh angel blew his trumpet". In 11,15-19 John appears to return to the trumpets of chapters 8-9. After another lengthy intercalation (chs. 12-14) there is the section which introduces the pouring of the seven bowls: 15,1-16,1. Between 8,1-

⁽³⁴⁾ Cf. BAUCKHAM, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 82: "To indicate that the prayers of the saints are answered by the eschatological judgment of God on the earth, the angel takes fire, symbolizing judgment, from the altar and throws it on the earth".

⁽³⁵⁾ Cf. LAMBRECHT, "Structuration", 87-88. Cf. VANNI, *Struttura*, e.g., 125: the seventh seal "ha, come suo contenuto specifico, un altro settenario annunciato in 8,2: il settenario degli angeli con le trombe"; BAUCKHAM, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 70: "The seven angels with their trumpets are introduced in the midst of the account of the opening of the seventh seal in order to indicate that the account ... of the seven trumpet blasts is in some sense included in the events that follow the opening of the seventh seal"; cf. 250, be it in a less clear way.

6 on the one hand and 11,15-19 and 15,1–16,1 on the other, remarkable similarities exist. They seem to confirm the approach of 8,1-6 as a unit which is being defended in this article.

First of all to be noted is the presence of interruptions both after the sixth seal (ch. 7) and the sixth trumpet (10,1–11,13), i.e., before the opening of the seventh seal (8,1) and the blowing of the seventh trumpet (11,15). One should further compare:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 8,1b (silence) | 11,15b (loud voices) |
| 8,2a (7 angels) | 15,1 (7 angels with plagues) |
| 8,2b (trumpets given) | 15,5-8 (bowls given) |
| 8,3-5abc (liturgy) | 11,15c-18 (liturgy) and 15,2-4 (liturgy) |
| 8,5d (earthquake) | 11,19 (earthquake) |
| 8,6 (preparation) | 16,1 (preparation). |

The clause καὶ ἐγένοντο φωναὶ μεγάλαι ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ (11,15b) antithetically corresponds to the clause ἐγένετο σιγὴ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ (8,1b). The silence symbolizes expectation and tension; it is filled with the actions of the angels in 8,3-5abc. The loud voices already celebrate God's imminent victory; silence would here be out of place: see 11,15c-19ab (cf. also the song of Moses in 15,3-4). In 8,5d the actions of the "other angel" are accompanied by "thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake". In 11,19 the celebration is followed by the opening of God's temple and the presentation of the ark of the covenant within it (v. 19ab); this is accompanied by "flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and earthquake, and heavy hail" (v. 19c)⁽³⁶⁾. In 8,6 the seven angels make themselves ready to blow the trumpets; in 16,1 a loud voice orders the seven angels to pour out on the earth the bowls of the anger of God⁽³⁷⁾.

The numerous similarities between 8,1-6 and 11,15-19/15,1–16,1 regarding content and vocabulary, as well as their position within

⁽³⁶⁾ In comparison with 4,5 "earthquake" is added in 8,5d; and in 11,19c the formula is even more expanded by means of "heavy hail"; in 16,18-21 the formula will break: no longer accompanying phenomena but the destroying events themselves are depicted by terms taken from that formula. Cf. BAUCKHAM, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 199-209: "The Eschatological Earthquake" (the OT influences are studied); BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 241-244.

⁽³⁷⁾ For more details see LAMBRECHT, "Structuration", 93-95 (the earthquakes) and 100-103 (11,15-19 and 15,1–16,1).

the respective series of seals and trumpets — together with the progression of 11,15-19/15,1-16,1 on the story-line — should confirm one's conviction that 8,2-6 is intimately connected with 8,1 and the whole of 8,1-6 constitutes a tight unity. From all this it again appears that the seventh seal encompasses the seven trumpets⁽³⁸⁾.

III. Conclusion and Reflection

By way of summary five main conclusions are drawn from the preceding brief analysis of the texts. Some final remarks will be added; they are intended as a means to confront the results of this study with those in the major and valuable work of Giancarlo Biguzzi.

Five Conclusions

The series of the seals is a series of *punishments*. In this general respect seals are not different from trumpets and bowls. The punishment character applies to all four seals of horse and rider, thus also to the first seal. The fifth seal, itself not a punishment, nevertheless appears to be, through the martyrs' prayer and God's answer, very much connected with judgment and vengeance. The sixth seal ends at 6,17. In its depiction of the cosmic upheaval this seal shows the circumstantial onset of the day of imminent wrath. The opening of the seventh seal by the Lamb has to be considered as the climax of God's vengeance, or, perhaps better, as the beginning of its climactic realization.

The seals, however, are but *the actual preparation* of God's punitive intervention. As such they are decidedly more than verbal prophecy or pure notification, more than Biguzzi's "weak" revelation. In the vision of John, after each opening of a seal something occurs. The riders in heaven are made ready; they are prepared to go into action on earth (cf. 6,1-8). The whole creation

⁽³⁸⁾ One is probably also justified to expect that John will use the same encompassing technique for the seventh trumpet as well. Cf. LAMBRECHT, "Structuration", 85-88; VANNI, *Struttura*, partim; BAUCKHAM, *The Climax of the Prophecy*, 7-9; L.L. THOMAS, *Revelation 1-7* (Chicago 1992) 43: "'telescopic' arrangement"; IDEM, "The Structure of the Apocalypse: Recapitulation or Progression?" *The Master's Seminary Journal* 4 (1993) 45-66 (this technique is also called "dove-tailing"); D.E. AUNE, *Revelation*. Vol. I (WBC; Waco, TX 1997) xciv-xcv and c-cv.

is shaken by the great earthquake; in their fear of God's wrath the inhabitants of the earth flee to the caves in the mountains (cf. 6,12-17). Such an onset, such an actual beginning is, of course, at the same time an effective announcement of future catastrophes⁽³⁹⁾. It may surprise the reader that the first four seals as well as the sixth seal remain without precise continuation. After 8,1 they simply disappear from the scene. Another series of seven, the trumpets, begins.

Strictly speaking the two visions or scenes of chapter 7 do not belong to the sixth seal. They constitute *an interruption*. In this and similar interruptions John pays attention to the persecuted Christians who are or will be saved. The intercalated passages are meant to console and encourage the servants of God. Although the visions of chapter 7 are not properly included in the series of seven seals, they must in one way or another be part of the scroll which is taken and opened by the Lamb, and as such they belong integrally to the revelation which the scroll contains. The author, however, does not explain how he sees the junction of consoling visions with those of punishing seals, how he sees that integration concretely.

The second scene (7,9-17) is *a proleptic vision*. In an eschatological anticipation John leaves the basic story-line of his prophetic report of future events, a line which goes from chapter 4 to chapter 22. For a moment he neglects, as it were, the logical progression in time; he leaps forwards immediately to the eschaton. In apocalyptic literature, however, one should not in the least be surprised by such proleptic procedures.

A climactic event is justly expected after the opening of the seventh seal in 8,1. The events which John describes in 8,2-6 most probably occur during the silence of half an hour which is mentioned in 8,1b. Seven angels appear and receive seven trumpets. The prayers of the Christians rise to heaven; the throwing of fire on the earth

⁽³⁹⁾ Cf. BIGUZZI, *Settinari*, 177, where he refers to commentators who "restando su di un piano generale e vago, definiscono i sigilli comme 'annuncio' o 'preparazione' differenziandoli da trombe e coppe che vengono invece definite 'realizzazione'", with reference in note to, "per tutti", E.-B. Allo, A. Feuillet and U.B. Müller. These commentators, however, may be right. C. GIBLIN, "Recapitulation and the Literary Coherence of John's Apocalypse", *CBQ* 56 (1994) 81-95, defines 4,1-8,6 as the "beginning", yet at the same time — less correctly, I think — as "an overview of what is now under way", "a suspenseful, oracle-like preface", and "a preview". Moreover, he does not consider 7,1-17 to be an interlude (85-86).

indicates that these prayers are heard. The angels with the trumpets prepare themselves to blow. The whole of 8,1-6 constitutes an introduction to the punitive actions of the seven trumpet angels in chapters 8-9. The narrative commences again with a series of seven, but the position on the story-line is advanced; there is a "chronological progression of some sort"⁽⁴⁰⁾: from preparation to partial, medicinal punishments, i.e., to plagues. In composing Revelation in this rather strange and intricate way John appears to be using *the encompassing technique*. The seventh seal includes and envelops the subsequent seven trumpets.

Critical Reflection

The major difference between the reading of chapters 4-8 by Giancarlo Biguzzi and the one presented and defended in this study concerns the view of "revelation". It is our firm belief that by breaking the seals and opening the book the Lamb not only communicates the fixed purposes of God's eschatological plan; this revelation is also and at the same time visionary "realization". No doubt, one has to add with much emphasis that the realization is far from being complete. Only the preparation of God's punitive intervention is taking place in heaven or in creation; the day has come but its wrath is still checked. However, for John this preparation, which proclaims and guarantees the fulfilment, is already a commencing enactment, not merely an announcing word, not a prophetic preview or advance showing. Therefore, as far as "action" is concerned the first series of the seals is not different from the two other series, i.e., the trumpets and the bowls.

It would seem that John considers the three septets as three series of punishment⁽⁴¹⁾. To be sure, Rev 4-22 is much more than judgment and catastrophe. Most probably, however, the intervening chapters 7 and 10-14 as well as chapters 17-22 do not properly belong to the threefold series of seven. The materials of chapter 7, of 10,1-11,13 and of chapters 12-13 and 14 are best seen as intercalations *vis-à-vis* the main "seven" structure suggested by the opening of the scroll. It is also true that the seventh element of a series is always open-ended and, therefore, leading up to the

⁽⁴⁰⁾ THOMAS, *Revelation 1-7*, 43 and id., "Structure", 52-56, 58-63.

⁽⁴¹⁾ For Biguzzi the sixth and the seventh bowls cannot strictly be called plagues: see the lengthy discussion in *Settinari*, 235-244.

climactic final stage of judgment (19,11–20,15). This judgment, however, prepares the way for its positive counterpart and outcome: the appearance of the new Jerusalem (21,1–8)⁽⁴²⁾. These remarks must unavoidably remain somewhat bold and provocative, since no critical analysis of the trumpets and bowls, no investigation of the interrupting and final passages could be carried out in this study.

The presence of repetitions is evident in the book of Revelation, especially in its proleptic visions, the hymnic materials and the intercalations⁽⁴³⁾. A comparison, e.g., of the bowls with the trumpets, as well as structural similarities, would indicate that a kind of repetition is also to be found in the septets⁽⁴⁴⁾. However, repetition and, more specifically, “recapitulation”⁽⁴⁵⁾ do not appear to be the most appropriate terms for the three series of seven. Between the second and the first series (and equally, it would seem, between the third and the second) there is progression in time, there is a new start on a more advanced point of the story-line, not pure repetition. With regard to the seventh seal, some form of encompassment or envelopment has to be assumed: that seal encloses the seven trumpets. It could well be that this equally applies to the seventh trumpet and the ensuing seven bowls.

The emphasis on punishment (i.e., on the specific content of the three series) should not prevent a correct understanding of Rev 4–22 as a whole. To be sure, “what must soon take place” (1,1) is in the first place God’s punitive action against the sinful “inhabitants of the earth”. One should, however, not forget that this vindication functions as a somewhat delayed but positive answer to the martyrs’ prayer for vengeance, that the servants of God still on earth, those marked with God’s seal, will be redeemed and, above all, that all punishments, except the last absolutely eschatological condemnation,

⁽⁴²⁾ SMITH, “Structure”, 387, calls 17,1–19,10 the Babylon Vision and 21,9–22,9 the Jerusalem Vision: “Unlike the surrounding sections, they have no plot motion but are rather ‘tableaus,’ symbol-rich emblems whose meaning is expounded and meditated upon”.

⁽⁴³⁾ For the intercalations, see THOMAS, “Structure”, 63–65.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Cf. LAMBRECHT, “Structuration”, 89; see p. 104 for a possible explanation for the frequency of the punishments and their somewhat repetitive character: John “warns as it were his readers that future historical realization will not necessarily follow his artificial prophecy”.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ The classic understanding of “recapitulation” is meant here, not the one modified by Biguzzi. See p. 205 and note 16 of this study.

are intended to bring about the conversion of the enemies⁽⁴⁶⁾. At the end of John's book, the so impressive vision of punishments and plagues gives way to the vision of the new heaven and new earth and that of the new Jerusalem. It is no doubt mainly because of that future reality — the city with the throne of God and the Lamb and with all God's servants — that both John and his readers pray "Come, Lord Jesus" (22,20).

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SUMMARY

In dialogue with the remarkable publication *I settenari nella struttura dell'Apocalisse. Analisi, storia della ricerca, interpretazione* by Giancarlo Biguzzi (1996), the "story-line" of Rev 6,1 – 8,6 is investigated here. The seals in chapter six are more than verbal prophecy; as the actual beginning of punishment they announce still greater catastrophes. The two scenes of chapter seven do not belong to the sixth seal; they interrupt the narrative and are "intercalations". The data described in 8,2-6 most probably occur during the silence mentioned in 8,1b. It would seem that the seventh seal (8,1) "encompasses" the subsequent seven trumpets.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ This is defended with great emphasis by BAUCKHAM, *The Climax of Prophecy*, in the lengthy chapter "The Conversion of the Nations", 238-337. See, e.g., 258: "Gods's kingdom will come, not simply by the deliverance of the church and the judgment of the nations, but primarily by the repentance of the nations as a result of the church's witness".

The Anarthrous $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ in Mark 15,39 and the Roman Imperial Cult

Introduction

In recent studies of the Gospel of Mark the centurion's confession in 15,39 has become a topic of active discussion as a key to the understanding of Markan christology. The common line of interpretation seems to follow the earlier work of V. Taylor that Mark intended the centurion's confession as a parallel to the same ephitet in the incipit (1,1) that confesses the deity of Jesus in the full Christian sense⁽¹⁾. R.H. Gundry has suggested that the identification of Jesus as Christ and Son of God in 1,1 and 15,39 transformed the crucifixion from the shameful death of a common criminal into the awe-inspiring death of a divine being who is God's appointed agent⁽²⁾. Mark 15,39, therefore, came to be viewed as the consummation of the development of Markan christology. J.D. Kingsbury has argued that the centurion's acclamation is pivotal because it constitutes the first open confession of Jesus as the Son of God on the part of a human being in Mark⁽³⁾. This line of interpretation that understands the confession as Christian is based on the reading of the anarthrous $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ as definite, according to E.C. Colwell's study of the Greek article⁽⁴⁾.

Recently, some have raised questions regarding the meaning of the anarthrous $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ and the great emphasis placed on 15,39 as the kernel of Markan christology. Earl S. Johnson has argued that though Colwell's rule does provide substantial supporting evidence, there are enough exceptions to the rule to leave the question open to debate⁽⁵⁾. If Johnson were correct, it weakens the

(1) V. TAYLOR, *The Gospel according to Mark* (London 1966) 597.

(2) R.H. GUNDRY, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids 1993) 4.

(3) J.D. KINGSBURY, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia 1983) 132; cf. Mark 3,11 where Jesus is acknowledged as "the Son of God" by the unclean spirits.

(4) E.C. COLWELL, "The Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament", *JBL* 52 (1933) 12-21.

(5) E.S. JOHNSON, "Is Mark 15.39 the Key to Mark's Christology?", *JSNT* 31 (1987) 3-22.

effectiveness of the statement as a confession of faith. Johnson has also pointed out that a nameless Roman soldier of a centurion's rank, otherwise unknown in the Gospel, is an unlikely vehicle for a statement of faith so profound in Markan christology and Christianity as a whole. Johnson argues that it is unlikely Mark's readers would find it believable that a professional soldier would risk his career in order to worship a crucified man, because it would be inconsistent with the image of a Roman centurion that Markan readers probably had⁽⁶⁾.

Although it is difficult to ascribe the whole of Markan christology to only two verses, I argue that 1,1 and 15,39 are quintessential statements of Mark's christology that must have challenged Markan readers to reconsider who the real "Son of God" was to them. As Johnson argues, it is unlikely that a centurion would confess that a crucified Jew was "Son of God", but the terminology of the confession seems to agree with his supposed cultural and religious background as a Roman soldier. The purpose of the present study is to show that the anarthrous *υἱὸς θεοῦ* in Mark 15,39 is a title thoroughly consistent with the background of the Roman imperial cult and, in particular, that of Augustus. Inquiring into the absence of the definite article, therefore, appears to be of minimal significance. The meaning of the anarthrous phrase *υἱὸς θεοῦ* in the Gospel of Mark has to be assessed in the context of the Gospel and its christology in its entirety, and the supposed cultural background of the Roman empire. Although not limited to the issues raised by Johnson, several aspects of his study will be taken into account.

The question of the anarthrous υἱὸς θεοῦ

Some have argued that *υἱὸς θεοῦ* should be understood as "a son of god" meaning the centurion saw Jesus as a demigod⁽⁷⁾. E.C. Colwell has suggested that the definite predicative nominative does not have the article when it precedes the verb⁽⁸⁾. His rule seems to have persuaded most scholars to read the anarthrous *υἱὸς θεοῦ* as definite, "the Son of God", and this is the view most modern English versions follow. However, Johnson has argued that "a re-

(6) JOHNSON, "Is Mark 15.39 the Key", 13.

(7) E.P. GOULD, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Mark* (Edinburgh 1896) 295.

(8) COLWELL, "Definite Rule", 13.

examination of Colwell's rule and a consideration of the general reputation which a Roman soldier of a centurion's rank may have had among Mark's readers all demand a reconsideration of this widely accepted interpretation of Mark 15,39"⁽⁹⁾. He goes on to argue that it is not likely that Mark's readers understood the centurion's remark christologically, given the grammatical evidence and the image they had of a Roman centurion, which was undoubtedly negative. It is my opinion, however, that Mark's readers could immediately see the significance of the centurion's confession. The confession was thoroughly consistent with the supposed cultural and religious background of a Roman centurion, because the titular epithet $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ appears to echo diction widely known in the Roman imperial cult. Augustus was known from the beginning of his political career as *divi filius*, 'son of god', which in Greek was written as ' $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ ' or ' $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ ' without the definite article. It seems plausible that the anarthrous $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ in Mark 15,39 echoes this very title because of the absence of the definite article and the fact that the remark was ascribed to a Roman centurion. While the intention of the Roman centurion is still difficult to ascertain, the circumstances and diction in which his remark is presented in Mark appear to be consistent with features of the Roman imperial cult.

The difficulty of ascertaining the meaning of $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$

The recurring difficulty in interpreting the centurion's confession seems to arise from approaching the anarthrous $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ from a Christian messianic perspective. The Christian messianic expectation speaks of one Messiah who is the Son of the one and only God, and thus any designation which refers to the messiah has to be definite, for the messiah is a unique being. This innate necessity for definiteness in the messianic title requires $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ to be definite if it is to have any validity as a messianic title from a Christian perspective. The problem is that the grammatical and textual background does not seem to warrant ascribing a definite sense to the anarthrous $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$. In the case of Mark 15,39 the confessional status was superimposed with little regard to its controversial grammatical features, let alone to the question of its historical

(9) JOHNSON, "Is Mark 15.39 the Key", 4.

authenticity. Johnson's arguments, therefore, penetrate into the issue of the historical authenticity of the centurion's confession, because not only does he deny its validity as a full Christian confession but also because he questions the necessity of having such a confession at the conclusion of the Gospel. Johnson argues that, "a Roman soldier of a centurion's rank and experience would be too sophisticated and would have been exposed to too many gods to make that kind of quick judgment at an execution, and Mark's readers would have known it"⁽¹⁰⁾.

Although Johnson's argument on the cultural and historical background of the Roman centurions in general appears to be thorough, how each individual centurion would have reacted to Jesus' crucifixion cannot be generalized by what the Roman centurions as a group would have done. The Gospels and Acts list a few Roman centurions who were receptive to the Gospel and the Jewish faith (Matt 8,10; Luke 7,9) and even one who became a Christian himself (Acts 10,1-48). Further, the image of a Roman centurion that Mark's readers were likely to have should not compromise its claim to historical authenticity, because it is improbable that Mark would invent a saying that he knew none of his readers would find believable. It is also possible that the miracles and signs that occurred at the moment of Jesus' death convinced the generally superstitious Romans and prompted the centurion to acknowledge Jesus' divinity.

It also seems highly unlikely that the definite article in 15,39 is lost due to authorial negligence or scribal error. Other Markan references to "the Son of God" (1,11; 3,11; God's "My Son" and "the Son of the Blessed" 1,11; 5,7; 9,7; 14,62) all have the definite article except 1,1⁽¹¹⁾. The context of the confession would have been clearer had the Roman centurion spoken in Latin instead of Greek and the Gospel had preserved the original Latin. If this was the case, the association of the confession with the Roman imperial cult, or the lack thereof, would have been obvious, because the Latin epithet *divi filius* would immediately direct one's attention to the Roman imperial cult. Latin, of course, does not have a definite article.

⁽¹⁰⁾ JOHNSON, "Is Mark 15.39 the Key", 15.

⁽¹¹⁾ Mark 5,7 does not have the definite article either but it is in the vocative. Also note that Mark routinely presents the "Son of Man" epithet with the article (Mark 2,10.28; 8,31.38; 9,9.12.31; 10,33.45; 13,6; 14,21.41.62).

However, this is not to say that the centurion was not fluent in Greek and thus omitted the definite article due to Latinizing influence, because there is a reasonable possibility that the confession was made originally in Greek. Although by law only Roman citizens could serve in the legions, shortage of manpower in Italy made it necessary for the legions to recruit locally. There were ever increasing numbers of non-Roman citizens enrolling in the legions with the promise of Roman citizenship at the end of their service. Among others, the eastern legions stationed in Asia Minor and Syria were almost entirely composed of Greek-speaking locals⁽¹²⁾, and these were the legions responsible for the defense and administration of Judea at the time of Jesus. So there appears to be a fair chance that the Roman centurion in Mark 15,39 was not a Latin-speaking Roman national but a Greek-speaking native and thus made the confession in Greek. It seems plausible, therefore, that the absence of the definite article in Mark 15,39 was deliberate and not accidental on the part of either the centurion himself or the Markan author.

Divi filius (or θεοῦ υἱὸς) in the context of the Roman imperial cult

The relationship between some of the literary features in Mark and the languages of the Roman imperial cult has been investigated by a number of scholars, and some have argued that the anarthrous υἱὸς θεοῦ in Mark 15,39 refers to the emperor. P. Bligh has argued that at the scene of the crucifixion the centurion gave the final verdict concerning Jesus in the words of the imperial title: 'This man, not Caesar, is the Son of God!'⁽¹³⁾ In my opinion, however, the evidence seems to suggest that the title 'son of god (υἱὸς θεοῦ)' was unique to Augustus, a title with which no other emperor, with the possible exception of Tiberius, could be associated, and thus it cannot be loosely applied to the Roman emperors in general as the object of state cult. Any Roman emperor could claim to be a god of some sort and was hailed by his subject as one, especially in the Eastern provinces; but the name 'son of god' was reserved only for Augustus because it was a personal name, not a mere title, that he assumed when he succeeded his deified father Julius Caesar.

⁽¹²⁾ *The Cambridge Ancient History* (eds. S.A. Cook, et al.) (vol. 10; Cambridge 1966) 227.

⁽¹³⁾ P.H. BLIGH, "A Note on Huios Theou in Mark 15:39", *The Expository Time* 80 (1968-69) 53.

It is widely known that the Romans deified and worshipped their emperor and took religious oaths to swear their allegiance to the emperor. It has to be noted, however, that at the time of Augustus and Tiberius the Romans did not readily associate the name of their emperor with the state religion. Their focus of worship was the *Genius* of the emperor, which was divine to begin with, not the person of the emperor. The Romans did not have a tradition of having a god-king as the head of their state, whereas it was customary in the East and Egypt where an ancient and strong tradition of absolute monarchy prevailed⁽¹⁴⁾. Although Augustus was hailed as the divine-king pharaoh in Egypt after he had defeated the Antony-Cleopatra coalition, no such honor for him could be produced in Rome and he knew it well. Knowing that the Romans were not accustomed to dictatorship (divine kingship as it was in the East) and the consequence that had been brought upon his uncle, in Rome Augustus strenuously refused to accept any autocratic and/or divine honor associated with it. He styled himself as the defender and restorer of the Republic, hence the name *princeps*. In the words of L.R. Taylor, “the *princeps senatus* was also *princeps civitatis*; the title expressed admirably the position of Octavian as the foremost citizen for whose welfare magistrates and priests offered sacrifice”⁽¹⁵⁾. However, this is not to say that Augustus was sincerely interested in the restoration of the Republic. He appears to have planned to create a monarchy that was modeled after the god-king monarchy in the East, notwithstanding that it would not be realized in his lifetime. Having no son of his own, he carefully prepared his grandchildren as his heirs to the Principate only to see them die young, which resulted in his adopting Tiberius as his son and heir at the last moment⁽¹⁶⁾. But Augustus did not prevent

⁽¹⁴⁾ A.H. M. JONES, *Augustus* (New York 1970) 150.

⁽¹⁵⁾ L.R. TAYLOR, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* (Middletown 1931) 156.

⁽¹⁶⁾ In the cenotaph for Lucius Caesar who was a grandson and one of the heir-designees of Augustus but died early — when he died in 2 CE Lucius Caesar was only nineteen — he is described as an augur, consul-designee, entrusted with the provinces in the West, and *princeps iuventutis*: L CAESARIS AVGVSTI CAESARIS PATRIS PATRIAE PONTIFICIS MAXIMI TRIBVNICIAE PTESTATIS XXV FILI AVGVRI CONSVLIS DESIGNATI PRINCIPIS IVVENTVTIS PATRONI COLONIAE NOSTRAE (ILS 139; CIL XI 1420). His brother Gaius was also given the same honor in 5 BCE. The only difference between the two brothers was that Gaius was made

deification and worship of himself and/or his *Genius* in the provinces, for it was customary in the East to honor the ruler as god-king. A majority of inscriptions that praise Augustus and his successors as gods are in fact Greek documents produced in or attributed to the Hellenistic East. Augustus himself also appears to have been looking forward to achieving divine honor after his death⁽¹⁷⁾. As time passed the Roman public was gradually imbued with the tradition of ruler-deification – Gaius Caligula is usually credited with the promiscuous introduction of Eastern culture and religion to Rome, something which was never appreciated under his rule – and it eventually became customary for the Romans to hail their emperor as divine. What concerns this study is that the way people understood and looked at their emperor must have differed between the reign of Tiberius, when Jesus' ministry and crucifixion occurred, and the reign of Vespasian, when the Gospel of Mark went into circulation. Although it is a difficult question to answer, it seems reasonable for the purpose of this study to assume that the epithet *divi filius* was more closely associated with the person of Augustus during the reign of Tiberius while it was associated with his divinity, *Divus Augustus*, during the reign of Vespasian. The intended readers of the Gospel of Mark, therefore, fall into the latter period, and it should be safe to assume that most of the intended Markan readers were familiar with the custom and terminology of the Roman imperial cult in full force and saw Augustus as a god rather than a political figure.

Gaius Julius Caesar, the founder of the Julian dynasty, is thought to have initiated, though posthumously, the custom of imperial deification. He was given the title of demigod in state worship during his lifetime and was officially deified posthumously by a senatorial decree on 1 January 42 BCE that conferred on him the name of *Divus Iulius*⁽¹⁸⁾. Some argue that Caesar received the divine honor

pontifex and was given a commission in the East whereas Lucius received the augurate and a commission in the West. But Gaius also died in 4 CE at the age of 24. For how they were first made *princeps iuventutis*, see *RG* 14. cf. *Tac. Ann.* I, 3.

(17) According to Dio, Augustus is said have commented on his own divinity as follows: "As for immortality we could not possibly achieve it, but by living nobly and by dying nobly we do in a sense gain even this boon. Therefore I, who already possess the first requisite and hope to possess the second, return to you the armies and the provinces, the revenues and the laws" (L.R. TAYLOR, *Divinity*, 157).

(18) COOK, *CAH*, 10.22.

before his death, because Cicero in the second Philippic, which was probably written around October of 44 BCE, calls Antony “the priest (*flamen*) to divine Julius (*divo Iulio*)” referring to a decree made before Caesar’s death⁽¹⁹⁾. Others have associated the first use of the title with the games which Octavian gave in honor of Caesar in July of 44⁽²⁰⁾. In either case it seems obvious that Gaius Julius Caesar was deified shortly after his death and this provided Octavian (later known as Augustus) the ground to claim that he was “son of god”, being the heir and adopted son of the divine Julius. Divine epithets given to Gaius Julius call him “savior,” “benefactor,” and “god”, but it is remarkable that neither θεοῦ υἱός nor *divi filius* can be found among them. On one occasion, Gaius Julius was praised as τὸν ἄπὸ Ἄρεως καὶ Ἀφροδείτης θεὸν ἐπιφανῆς καὶ κοινὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπινου βίου σωτήρ (SIG 760) = “the manifest god from Mars and Aphrodite, and universal savior of human life”. It is interesting that Gaius Julius was never called “son of god” even though he claimed that his family descended from Venus⁽²¹⁾. Since his father Gaius Caesar was never deified, perhaps he could not have had the title even if he had wanted it. The complete absence of the epithet *divi filius* which was later made so popular by his adopted son-nephew is remarkable nonetheless, because it strongly implies that the title was not present in the tradition of the Roman state cult prior to the time of Augustus.

Gaius Julius Octavianus Caesar (Octavian) who succeeded Gaius Julius as his heir quickly started to sign his name *Caesar divi filius*, which means “Caesar son of god”. It came to be so closely associated with Octavian that it became part of his name rather than a title. In the competition for supremacy against the more experienced and better financed Mark Antony the greatest weapon Octavian had was the memory of Gaius Julius whose great deeds still captivated the people of Rome, and he had every reason to emphasize his filial relationship with Gaius Julius. He was still a young man of nineteen when he learned of his uncle’s assassination and had held no significant public office or military post partly due to his youth and partly to his weak health. Mark Antony, on the other hand, was a famous general and a long-time

⁽¹⁹⁾ M.T. CICERO, *Cicero – Philippics* (trans. W.C.A. Ker) (vol. 15; Cambridge 1926) 172.

⁽²⁰⁾ TAYLOR, *Divinity*, 69.

⁽²¹⁾ TAYLOR, *Divinity*, 63.

associate of Gaius Julius and was consul with him in 44 BCE when Gaius Julius was murdered. After the Ides of March, according to Cicero, Mark Antony was said to have stolen the papers of Gaius Julius and produced fraudulent handwriting of Caesar to give orders of his own⁽²²⁾. He also claimed to be Gaius Julius' de facto heir, being senior member of Caesar's staff. It is not surprising, therefore, that Octavian was quick to seize upon the name and reputation of Gaius Julius by styling himself as Caesar's legitimate son — adopted or not — and the rightful heir⁽²³⁾. Octavian started using the name in 41 BCE when he was first recorded, as a member of *Triumviri Rei Publicae Constituendae, Imp. Caesar Divi f.*⁽²⁴⁾. Therefore, very early in his political career Octavian started to call himself the heir of Gaius Julius. The significance of the title is evident, because thereafter Octavian was called *Caesar divi f.* in every inscription and legend, long before and even after he was given the honorable name of *Augustus* by the Senate. It is also probable that the motivation for his adopting the title as part of his name was more political than religious, even though in ancient times offices in religion and politics were intertwined. If this was the case, it would be safe to assume that the name *divi filius* was not a pre-existing element of the Roman state cult but was an invention of Augustus due to the special political and religious circumstances under which he was placed.

⁽²²⁾ Cicero, *Philippics*, 162.

⁽²³⁾ According to Dio, in 34 BCE Anthony formed a coalition with Cleopatra and tried to make her son Ptolemy, the alleged son of Gaius Julius, the king of the East, if not the entire Roman empire, by undermining Octavian's position as the heir of Caesar. "He (Anthony) commanded people that Cleopatra should be called Queen of Kings, and, Ptolemy, whom they named Caesarion, King of Kings (βασιλέα βασιλέων). He declared that in very truth one was the wife and the other the son of the former Caesar (Gaius Julius), and he professed to be taking these measures for Caesar's sake, though his purpose was to cast reproach upon Caesar Octavianus because he was only an adopted and not a real son of his" (Dio XLIX 41, 1-2). (See Dio Cassius, *Roman History* (trans. Earnest Cary) (vol. 5; Cambridge 1917) 425.

⁽²⁴⁾ On 19 August of 43 BCE Octavian was announced as a *consul suffecti* when both consuls Pansa and Hirtius had died in battle, yet he was not named *divi filius* then but simply *C. Iulius C. f. Caesar*, whereas in 40 BCE when he was honored with a triumph he was named *imp. Caesar divi f.* See T.R.S. BROUGHTON, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* (vol. 2; Cleveland 1952) 371; V. EHRENBERG — A.H.M. JONES, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus & Tiberius* (Oxford 1976) 32.

The significance of the name *divi filius* is well-attested in a vast number of inscriptions and legends of Augustus that bear the name even well into the common era and after his death⁽²⁵⁾. The following

²⁵ There appear to be a number of variations to the formula used to display an emperor's relationship to his deified predecessor. They all stem from a common origin, i.e., IMP CAE DIVI F used by Augustus, and in fact each variation simply adds the names of the deified predecessors in succession, as many as necessary. Therefore, there can be as many formulae as needed, but at least two distinct patterns have emerged. One is the basic pattern, "A DIVI F (DIVI X)" [X is the deified predecessor of A]. This formula appears to be early and quite rare, and it was primarily associated with Augustus. The usual form is "IMP CAESAR DIVI F DIVI IVLI." One such example is found on a coin dated around 32 BCE (American Numismatics Society Call No.1944-100-78385). Instead of dividing "DIVI F" in half and inserting the name of Gaius Julius in the middle as later emperors did, "DIVI IVLI" is suffixed to "DIVI F". It seems to conform to the nature of "DIVI F" considering that it was not a title but a name and thus was indivisible.

The other is the most popular and numerous pattern, i.e., "A DIVI X F" [X is the deified predecessor of A]. This formula was widely adopted by Tiberius and his successors and became the standard formula used in all inscriptions attributed to the Roman emperors. The enormous amount of evidence supporting this formula shows its wide acceptance by later emperors. "A DIVI F DIVI X" formula, on the other hand, does not seem to occur frequently, if at all, in the titles of later emperors. The "A DIVI X F" formula became the standard after the reign of Augustus, and it is also to be noted that even Augustus is later described as using this formula. An inscription that can be dated around 184 CE carries a legend, "IMP CAESAR DIVI IVLI F AVGVSTVS" (ILS 98; AE 1992 79). All other known variations of the formula are based on the "A DIVI F DIVI X" formula. One variation of the pattern is "A DIVI X F DIVI Y NEPOTI (DIVI Z PRONEPOS)" [A is the successor of deified X, who also succeeded deified Y, who had in turn also succeeded deified Z]. An example of this formula is "TI CAESARI DIVI AVG F DIVI IVLI NEPOTI AVGVSTO IMP PONT MAXVMO TRIBVN POTEST XXVI COS IIII" (ILS 155; 21-22 CE; Also see ILS 113; CIL XI 0367). Also note that this title was given to heirs to the throne as well as to emperors. "DRVSO CAESARI TI AVG F DIVI AVG N DIVI IVLI PRON COS PONTIFICI" (CIL V 5121). Another notable example of this formula belongs to Antoninus Pius who had the fortune of having a series of deified emperors before him. "IMP CAES DIVI HADRIANI F DIVI TRAIANI PARTHIC NEP DIVI NERVAE PRON T AELIVS HADRIANVS ANTONINVS AVG PIVS PONT MAX TR POT XXI IMP II COS IV PP" (ILS 2005; 158 CE). [Also see ILS 113, 156, 177, 178, 193, 228, 309, 2006 for more examples.] There are also Greek versions of this formula. Compare these two: "IMP CAESARI DIVI TRAIANI PARTHICI F DIVI NERVAE NEPOTI TRAIANO HADRIANO AVG" (ILS 309) and "ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ ΚΑΙΣΑΡ, ΘΕΟΥ ΤΡΑΙΑΝΟΥ ΠΑΡΘΙΚΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ, ΘΕΟΥ ΝΕΡΟΥΑ ΥΙΩΝΟΣ, ΤΡΑΙΑΝΟΣ ΑΔΡΙΑΝΟΣ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΣ" (IGEyst: Prusa 1002).

is a collection of inscriptions and legends that contain the name and office of Augustus. The basic form of the Latin inscriptions attributed to Augustus is as follows: IMP CAESAR DIVI F AVGVSTVS (ILS 113; CIL XI 0367; 21 CE). This was the standard form of the name and title of Augustus but it varied slightly to accommodate his other titles and office that the occasion called for. The following is one of the longer examples: IMP CAESARI DIVI F AVGVSTO PONTIFIC MAXIMO PATRI PATRIAE AVG XV VIR S F VII VIR EPVLON COS XIII IMP XVII TRIBVNIC POTES XXX (ILS 107; 7-8 CE). The name of the person is *Caesar divi f(ilius) Augustus* (Octavian) and his titles and office as shown here are *imperator*, *pontifex maximus* ('chief priest'), *pater patriae* ('father of the state')⁽²⁶⁾,

Further variations of the pattern that trace an emperor's lineage as far as five generations have also been identified. They are quite the same as above, however, but simply add ABNEPOS and ADNEPOS as the fourth and fifth generation of deified predecessors. These are mostly dated in the late second century CE and afterwards, and thus of little interest to the present study. It will suffice to introduce for the sake of completeness a few examples of the formulae in question. This bilingual inscription, written in 58 CE to commemorate the repair of the road from Nikaia to Apameia by C. Julius Aquila, who was a proconsul in Pontus and Bythnia in 57/58, is also of some interest in that here Nero, the reigning emperor, is described as the son of Claudius and traces his lineage, not physical, of course, back to Caligula, Tiberius and Augustus. This inscription traces Nero's descent back four generations. The Greek part reads, "ΝΕΡΩΝ ΚΛΑΥΔΙ[ΟΣ], ΘΕΟΥ ΚΛΑΥΔΙΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ, ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΚΟΥ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΟΣ ΥΙΩΝ[ΟΣ], ΤΙΒΕΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΟΣ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥ ΕΓ[ΓΟΝΟΣ, ΘΕΟΥ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥ Α[ΠΟΓΟΝΟΣ], ΚΑΙΣΑΡ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΣ ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΚΟΣ, ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΥΣ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΟΣ, ΔΗΜΑΡΧΙ[ΚΗΣ ΕΧΟ]ΥΣΙΑΣ ΤΟ Δ, ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ ΤΟ Ε, ΥΠΙΑΤΟΣ ΤΟ Γ." The Latin part reads, "[NERO CLAUDIUS DIVI CLAUDI FILIUS GERMANICI CAESARIS NEPOS TI. CAESARIS AUG.] PRONEPOS, DIVI AUG. ABNEPOS, CAESAR [AUGUSTUS GERMANICUS PONT. MAX.] TRIB. POT. IIII, [IMP. V], COS. III" (IGEyst: Nikaia 0021; Also see ILS 5883 = IGRR III 83 and CIL III 12226). Commodus employs the same formula, tracing his lineage as far back as Nerva, "IMP CAESAR M AVRELIVS COMMOD ANTONINVS PIVS FELIX AVG SARMATICVS MAXIMVS BRITTANICVS PONTIFEX MAXIMVS TR POTES TATIS XI IMP VIII COS V P P DIVI M ANTONINI PII FILIVS DIVI PII NEPOS DIVI HADRIANI PRONEPOS DIVI TRAIANI PARTHICI ABNEPOS DIVI NERVAE ADNEPOS" (186 CE; ILS 397; CIL VIII 10307; Also see CIL X 6654; CIL V 4055). Septimus Severus also employs the same formula but he does not claim to be the son of the deified Commodus, for obvious reasons. [For inscriptions attributed to him see AE 1978, 1979, 1984; CIL VI 01031].

⁽²⁶⁾ TAYLOR, *Divinity*, 200.

augur, consul and *tribunicia potestas*⁽²⁷⁾. The word *Augustus* is not a title or office but a name, meaning ‘worthy of praise/honor,’ but it became customary for later emperors to call themselves Augustus. It is remarkable that the other name of Octavian, *divi filius*, does not appear to have the same range of application. It is to the exclusivity of this title *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱός) that I wish to direct our attention. Greek inscriptions and legends of Augustus also have a similar structure, but the honors attributed to him appear to be more Hellenistic in nature than Roman. For instance, Augustus is mentioned in a letter of Tiberius as: ...θεοῦ Καίσα[α] | ρος θεοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ Σωτήρος Ἐλευθερίου ... (SEG XI 922-3)⁽²⁸⁾ = “god Caesar son of god, Augustus, savior of freedom.” Most other Greek references to Augustus seem to be in the same style. Augustus was widely referred to as: ἡ καίσαρος κράτησις θεοῦ υἱοῦ (PRyl 601; PSI 1150) = “The mastery of Caesar son of god”; καίσαρ θεοῦ υἱός Αὐτοκράτωρ (PTeb 382) = “Caesar son of god, Emperor”; Καίσαρος αὐτοκράτωρ θεοῦ υἱός Ζεὺς ἐλευθέριος (POslo 26; SB 8824) = “Emperor Caesar son of god, Zeus the liberator, Augustus”; Αὐτοκράτωρ Καίσαρ Σεβαστὸς σωτὴρ καὶ εὐεργέτης (SB 8897) = “Emperor Caesar Augustus, savior and benefactor”.

The next emperor was Tiberius, about whom opinions seem to vary among people. He was a good general and administrator and did his best to keep the rules and policies laid down by his great predecessor. He pursued a policy of maintaining the *status quo* of Augustan rule and mindfully avoided changing anything that Augustus had established. But his personality did not have the graciousness and tact in dealing with people that Augustus had possessed in so supreme a degree, and, according to Suetonius, Augustus often tried to defend Tiberius before the Senate and people by saying that his signs of arrogance were natural failings and not intentional⁽²⁹⁾. Without the presence of Augustus to mitigate the relation between Tiberius and the Senate, however, Tiberius gradually came to despise the incompetence and hesitancy of the Senate, and the Senate his odd habits and the lack of social aptitude which was seen by the populace

(27) A new form of tribunitial power focusing on the inviolability of the tribune that Gaius Julius first assumed in the year 48 BCE, it is a sign of the Republic that Augustus claimed to uphold (TAYLOR, *Divinity*, 134).

(28) EHRENBERG – JONES, *Documents*, 87.

(29) Suetonius, *The Lives of the Caesars* (trans. J.C. Rolfe) (vol. 1; Cambridge 1913) 391.

as austerity and arrogance. For his contemporaries his retirement to Capreae was only a cowardly desertion of his post⁽³⁰⁾. Although Gaius Germanicus (better known as Caligula), who succeeded Tiberius, asked for divine honors on his behalf, the Senate was unable to grant it due to its incompetence and dislike of Tiberius⁽³¹⁾. Therefore, divine epithets attributed to Tiberius were small in number compared to those of Augustus, and his titles seem to be concerned more with politics than religion. Unlike many other Roman emperors, he does not officially claim to be a new god or a descendant of one. Inscriptions and legends attributed to Tiberius are also very similar in form to those of Augustus. The following are some notable examples: TI CAESARI DIVI AVGVSTI F AVGVSTO PONTIF MAXIMO COS V TRIB POTEST XXXIII (ILS 159; 9 CE) = “Tiberius Caesar Augustus, son of Augustus, chief priest”; ...τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Τιβερίου Σεβαστοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ (Ilium; IGRR IV 206)⁽³²⁾ = “of the Emperor Tiberius Augustus, son of Augustus”; [Τιβέρω Καίσαρος] Σεβάστω παῖδα (From Lesbos; IG XII 2540) = “[Tiberius Caesar] child of Augustus”; [Τιβέριος Καίσαρ θεοῦ Σεβ]αστοῦ υἱὸς [Σ]εβαστοῦ ἀρχιερεὺς (Decree on Imperial cult and letter of Tiberius, Gytheion (Laconia); SEG XI 922-3) = “[Tiberius Caesar, god, Au]gustus, so[n of A]ugustus, chief priest”; Τιβέριος Καίσαρ Σεβαστοῦ θεοῦ υἱὸς αὐτοκράτωρ (SB 8317) = “Emperor Tiberius Caesar Augustus, son of god”; Τιβέριος Καίσαρ νέος Σεβαστοῦ αὐτοκράτωρ θεοῦ Διὸς ἐλευθερίου (POxy 240) = “Emperor Tiberius Caesar, new Augustus, son of Zeus the liberator.” It is evident that Tiberius emphasizes his relationship with Augustus by asserting that he is the “son of Augustus” or a “new Augustus”. This appears to have been a necessary measure for consolidating his power, considering that the influence of Augustus was so supreme even during the reign of Tiberius. However, it is remarkable that he does not openly call himself *divi filius* or θεοῦ υἱὸς⁽³³⁾. Tiberius did not

⁽³⁰⁾ COOK, *CAH*, 10.652.

⁽³¹⁾ COOK, *CAH*, 10.653.

⁽³²⁾ Many of these inscriptions and legends may be found in EHRENBURG - JONES, *Documents*, 75-76, 89.

⁽³³⁾ The semantic difference between “DIVI F AVG” and “DIVI AVG F” seems trivial but the meaning is completely different. The former is the name of Augustus, “son of god, Augustus” and the latter is the title of Augustus’ successor, “son of deified Augustus.” It may be confusing because both contain the same words and only the word order is different, but the difference in meaning is clearly seen when the title was used to refer to a son of Augustus

appear to have officially used the title for himself and the evidence available seems to support the view⁽³⁴⁾. Therefore, it appears safe to assume that Tiberius did not officially use the title for himself or did so very rarely.

The titles and divine honors of other emperors up to Vespasian will be treated briefly. The inscriptions listed here are all in Greek so that they may clarify the connection between *divi filius* and θεοῦ υἱός. What is noteworthy about the titles of other emperors is that none of the following emperors officially claimed to be called *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱός). Although they lavished upon themselves the utmost praise and honor possible, none of the emperors officially

during his lifetime, when he was not yet officially deified. In this case, Augustus is still described as “DIVI F AVG”, his sons cannot be called “DIVI AVG F” but simply “AVG F”. Therefore, it should be clear that DIVI in the name of Augustus is not a sign of divinity in Augustus himself but refers to the deified Gaius Julius, his adopted father. Note how the two grandnephews of Augustus, Gaius and Lucius, officially adopted as his heirs, are described in this inscription in relation to Augustus himself: “C CAESARI AVG F D(IVI) N(EPOTI) PONTIF COS DESIGN PRINCIPI IVVENTVT IMP CAESARI DIVI F AVG PONT MAXIM COS XII TRIB POTESTAT XX IMP XIII L CAESARI AVG F DIVI NEP ...” (3 BCE; ILS 106; CIL XI 3040). [Also see ILS 107; AE 1992, 771; ILS 139; CIL XI 1420] Note that in this inscription Gaius Julius is not specifically named but simply referred to as a “god” and thus is consistent with the name of Augustus. Instead of calling himself “DIVI IVLI F” as later generations did, Augustus called himself “DIVI F” and there was no doubt whom “DIVI” refers to during his lifetime and well after his death. If it ever needed clarification “DIVI IVLI” was suffixed to “DIVI F” instead of making it “DIVI IVLI F”. Therefore, the difference between “DIVI F AVG” and “DIVI AVG F” should be recognized, because it is with the inherent peculiarity of the name “DIVI F” and its Greek counterpart “θεοῦ υἱός” that the present study is primarily concerned.

(34) There is very little philological or archaeological evidence to support Tiberius’ use of the “DIVI F” name. At least two Roman coins have been found bearing the legend “TI DIVI F AVGVSTVS TR POT XX” (American Numismatics Society Coin Number 1001-1-22257 and 1001-1-22211). These are dated around 18-19 CE, early in his reign. Coins that feature both Augustus and Tiberius have also been found, and these two particular coins bear the legend, “CAESAR AVGVSTVS DIVI F PATER PATRIAE” on the front and “TI CAESAR AVG F TR POT XV” on the back (American Numismatics Society Coin Number 1944-100-39116 and 1944-100-39115). These can be dated around 13-14 CE, probably shortly after the death of Augustus, and here Tiberius is called “(DIVI) AVG F” as he was usually named. The amount of evidence supporting Tiberius’ use of the name “DIVI F” is, therefore, so small that it is almost inconsequential. The majority of currently available philological and archaeological evidence strongly argues for the prevalence of “TI AVG F”.

used the name *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱὸς), and this seems to support the view that *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱὸς) was not a title that could be applied to Roman emperors in general.

Gaius Caligula (37-41 CE): νέωι θεῶι (IGR IV 1094) = “new god”; Ἄρηος υἱόν (CIA III 444a) = “son of Ares”; Σεβαστοῦ υἱὸν νέον Ἄρη (CIA III 444) = “son of Augustus, a new Ares”⁽³⁵⁾.

Claudius (41-54 CE): Τιβέριος Κλαύδιος κύριος (SB 4331) = “Tiberius Claudius lord”; Τιβέριος Κλαύδιος Καῖσαρ Σεβαστός αὐτοκράτωρ ὁ κύριος (GOA 1038) = “Emperor Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus, the lord”; θεὸς Κλαύδιος (PSI 1235; POxy 713) = “Claudius god”; θεὸς Καῖσαρ (POxy 808; POxy 1021) = “Caesar god”; θεὸς Σεβαστός (PMich 244) = “Augustus god”; ὁ κύριος (OPetr 209) = “The lord.”

Nero (54-58 CE): Νέρων ὁ κύριος (PLond 1215; POxy 246; GOA 1038) = “Nero the lord”; Νέρων Καῖσαρ ὁ κύριος (OPetr 288; POxy 246) = “Nero Caesar the lord”; Νέρων Κλαύδιος Καῖσαρ... ὁ σωτὴρ καὶ εὐεργέτης τῆς οἰκουμένης (OGIS 668) = “Nero Claudius Caesar... the savior and benefactor of the inhabited world”; Ἀγαθὸς Δαίμων τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀρχὴ ὧν τε πάντων ἀγαθῶν (POxy 1021) = “The good god of the inhabited world, the beginning of all good things”; τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ μεγίστου θεῶν (IM 157b) = “the son of the greatest of the gods”; ὁ τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου κύριος Νέρων (SIG 814) = “Nero Lord of the whole world”.

Vespasian (69-79 CE): Οὐεσπασιανὸς ὁ κύριος (POxy 1439; SB 1927) = “Vespasian the lord”; Οὐεσπασιανὸς αὐτοκράτωρ ὁ κύριος (GOA 439; SC 3563) = “Emperor Vespasian, the lord”; θεὸς Οὐεσπασιανός (POxy 257; POxy 1112) = “Vespasian god”.

Considering the philological and archaeological evidence presented, therefore, it seems plausible that the name *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱὸς) was unique to Augustus and was probably not used by any other emperor beside himself⁽³⁶⁾. Johnson has argued that

⁽³⁵⁾ The association with Mars was not novel at the time of Caligula. The very title was also given to Gaius Caesar, the grandnephew of Augustus. An inscription from the theater of Dionysus in Athens records that Gaius Caesar was proclaimed νέος Ἄρης, the new Ares (IG II² 3250). For a more detailed discussion about Gaius Caesar and the honors bestowed to him in the East, especially in Athens, see *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects* (eds. F. MILLAR - E. SEGAL) (Oxford 1984) 171-5.

⁽³⁶⁾ This position requires further qualification. From the holdings of the American Numismatic Society at least 308 coins were found to contain a legend DIVI F attributed to four different emperors. Among these coins with the

Augustus was hesitant about being called a god or a son of God during his lifetime³⁷, but the evidence presented seems to indicate

DIVI F legend only 5 belong to Tiberius, 28 to Domitian, and 4 to Nero, which leaves Augustus with at least 271 references. Therefore, it can be argued that attempts were made under the rule of Tiberius, Nero, and Domitian to associate the honorable name *divi filius* with the reigning emperors, and thus the name was not necessarily exclusive to Augustus. It is also suggestive that the name *divi filius* was current as late as 80 CE when the coins attributed to Domitian were minted. However, a more careful study reveals new facts. The majority of coins minted under Tiberius consistently display “DIVI AVGVSTI F”, and there are very few that show “DIVI F”. The latter are dated between 13 and 16 CE, “IMP VII”, and this is very early in the reign of Tiberius because he officially became the emperor on August 19, 14 CE. The majority of coins minted under Nero also consistently display “NERO CLAVD DIVI CLAVD F”, and there are very few that show “NERO CLAVD DIVI F”. The interesting parallel to the coins of Tiberius is that those rare Neronian coins that bear “NERO CLAVD DIVD F” are all dated around 55-58 CE, which is very early in the reign of Nero, because his accession was on October 13, 54 CE. The case of Domitian is even more interesting in that he used both “DIVI F” and “DIVI AVG VESP F”, but the former before his accession and the latter after. The Domitian coins that bear “DIVI F” were all minted before the accession of Domitian, because they show “COSVII (80CE)” and “PRINCEPS IVVENTVTIS”, which was a title customarily given to the heir of an emperor. [For more on the origin of the title and *iuvenes*, see Millar and Segal, 16-17]. Those coins of Domitian that display “DIVI AVG VESP F” were probably issued in the same period, but after his accession. Considering that Domitian’s accession was on September 14 of 81 CE, these coins either predate Domitian’s official reign or are located at its very beginning. Therefore, there appears to be a pattern of sorts. These could be accession coins, specially issued to commemorate the accession.

It also has to be noted that the official titles of Tiberius, Nero and Domitian at the time of their deaths did not include “DIVI F”. Those of Tiberius were “*Tiberius Caesar Divi Augusti Filius Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribuniciae potestatis XXXIIX, imperator VIII, Consul V*”. At the time of his death, Nero’s full titles were “*Imperator Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribuniciae potestatis XIV, Imperator XIII, Consul V, Pater Patriae*”. In the case of Domitian, the official titles were “*Imperator Caesar Domitianus Augustus Germanicus, Pontifex Maximus Tribuniciae potestatis XVI, Imperator XXIII, Consul XVII, Pater Patriae*”. It seems that the name *Divi filius* was never part of the official titles of Tiberius, since he used *Divi Augusti Filius* (son of deified Augustus) instead. This title emphasizes the sonship of Tiberius to Augustus, not the divinity of Tiberius, and should not be confused with *divi filius*, which only Augustus used. This type of honorific was also used by several other emperors who wished to secure public support based on the respectable reputation of their deified predecessors. The same applies to both Nero and Domitian. They apparently used the title on the coins as propaganda early in their reign, but did not go as far as including the

that Augustus was eager to promulgate his title *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱὸς) from early on in his political career. Having said that, the relationship between the anarthrous υἱὸς θεοῦ in Mark 15,39 and the title of Augustus becomes interesting, because now we cannot dismiss the anarthrous υἱὸς θεοῦ as a grammatical mistake or a mundane praise for Roman emperors in general. Augustus was the greatest emperor (and/or head of state) the Romans ever had. As he himself mentions with pride in his *Res Gestae*⁽³⁸⁾, he put an end to the disorder and civil war and created a great empire in which people could live in peace and prosper, the likes of which they had not known, spanning most of the known world in this period.

Though Gaius Julius had created the foundation upon which Augustus built his empire, its making was entirely due to his own years of unrelenting labor. It was not mere flattery when people called Augustus savior, lord, god, benefactor, etc. To the minds of ordinary people he was every bit what they called and praised⁽³⁹⁾. If this anarthrous Greek phrase υἱὸς θεοῦ in Mark 15,39 was in any way related to the title of Augustus *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱὸς), then the absence of the definite article would not have mattered to any Markan reader who was contemporary to the Roman imperial cult because anyone would have found it obvious to whom this Greek

honorific in their official titles. Trajan, however, inserted the phrase "*Divi Nervae Filius*" (son of deified Nerva) in his official title in the memory of his deified adopted-father Nerva. He did not claim in his lifetime the divinity on his own, though it was promptly granted by the Senate posthumously. In the case of Nero and Domitian, it is possible that they presumptuously claimed the name *divi filius* on their own when they were alive, but it is unlikely. The Senate would have annulled the name after their deaths in any case, because of the disrepute of the deceased emperors. Therefore, it seems plausible that the name *divi filius* was probably exclusive to Augustus, and the formula "DIVI X F" has to be distinguished from the name of Augustus.

Having said that, "DIVI F" does occur in small number of inscriptions and legends attributed to other emperors, for instance, "IMP T CAESAR DIVI F VESPASIANVS AVGVSTVS PONTIFEX MAXIMVS TRIBVNIC POTESTATE X IMPERATOR XVII PATER PATRIAE CENSOR COS VIII" (ILS 269; 81 CE). However, their number is very small compared to the overwhelming amount of evidence attributed to Augustus, and there are indications that suggest lack of consistency in later inscriptions using "DIVI F" alongside of "DIVI X F" formula. Having considered all other variants, therefore, it still seems plausible that the name "DIVI F" was unique to Augustus.

⁽³⁷⁾ JOHNSON, "Is Mark 15.39 the Key", 12.

⁽³⁸⁾ TAYLOR, *Divinity*, 156.

⁽³⁹⁾ Cf. TAYLOR, *Divinity*, 229.

phrase υἱὸς θεοῦ refers. It would also invoke special attention in any Markan reader, because the title was reserved for Augustus only: the greatest emperor who ever lived and now was a god.

The challenge Mark poses to the Roman imperial cult, therefore, becomes conspicuous through the centurion's confession. Mark's use of diction not only echoes that of the Roman imperial cult but also it challenges the most revered figure of the cult — the emperor Augustus himself. C. Evans has suggested that the features and terminology used in both the incipit and the centurion's confession echo the language particular to the Roman imperial cult⁽⁴⁰⁾. His argument has merit considering the verbal similarity between those two passages. The unique feature in both verses seems to be the absence of the definite article, because the other title of Jesus in the incipit, Χριστοῦ, does not have the definite article either (cf. 9,41). Gundry has argued that its double anarthrousness stresses the quality of Jesus' divine sonship⁽⁴¹⁾. Therefore, Mark's use of anarthrous υἱὸς θεοῦ to express Jesus' divine sonship at the very beginning and near the end of the Gospel seems to suggest strongly that both occurrences should be taken in the same light as Christian and confessional.

Markan treatment of the title "Son of God"

Investigating how the title "Son of God" is used in the Gospel of Mark will surely go beyond the scope of this study. Here it will

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Cf. C.A. EVANS, *Mark* (WBC 34B; Dallas forthcoming): "It is important to view the history of the Julian emperors from Christianity's perspective in the late 60's, when in all probability the Gospel of Mark was written. In the face of what then would have appeared as a steep decline in the respect for and prospects of the Roman emperorship, with one murderer and manipulator after another trying to gain the throne, Mark's opening words, 'The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the son of God', would have had the ring of a competitor's claim on the devotion and loyalty of the people of the Roman Empire. In my view, the Markan evangelist presents Jesus as the true son of God and in doing so deliberately sets Jesus over against Rome's quest to find a suitable emperor, savior, and lord. All of the features that made up the emperor cult and the various customs associated with the office and title of emperor in various ways find expression in New Testament theology. It is clear that early Christians full well understood that their confession that Jesus was 'Lord', 'Savior', and 'son of God' directly competed with and challenged the Roman Emperor and the cult that had grown up around the office" (59).

⁽⁴¹⁾ GUNDRY, *Mark*, 951.

suffice to show briefly that Mark uses the title with consistency throughout the Gospel to express Jesus' divine sonship. There is little doubt that Mark took the anarthrous υἱὸς θεοῦ in 15,39 as definite because the rest of the Gospel clearly and uniformly proclaims the title in the definite sense with the proper article. There is also no doubt that the early church and readers of Mark believed Jesus to be the Son of God and Savior and thus took the centurion's confession as definite. The centurion's confession that Jesus was "son of God" does not make him a Christian or convert, for mere recognition of Jesus' divine sonship does not necessarily entail conversion. After all, demons and unclean spirits have done the same without converting (3,11; 5,7; cf. 1,24)⁽⁴²⁾. It is also impossible to determine what the centurion might have seen at the time of Jesus' death and how it affected him physically and psychologically.

Throughout the Gospel the readers of Mark have been repeatedly informed of the connection between the title "the Son of God" and Jesus well before the climactic conclusion in 15,39. In my opinion, therefore, the absence of the definite article in the centurion's confession could not have had as great an impact on the Markan readers as Johnson implies. P. Davis has argued that the intended Markan readers probably read the centurion's confession in the light of other references in Mark rather than searching out other anarthrous nouns which precede the verb to see if the anarthrous υἱὸς θεοῦ really is definite⁽⁴³⁾. It is also inappropriate to generalize how a centurion as an individual would have reacted to the death of Jesus in terms of how Roman centurions as a group would have. To anyone who has read the Gospel of Mark leading up to the crucifixion there would have been little doubt to whom the anarthrous title refers and what the title means.

Conclusion

A study on the anarthrous υἱὸς θεοῦ in the centurion's confession suggests an interesting parallel with the language of the Roman imperial cult. The epithet υἱὸς θεοῦ in Mark 15,39 can be related

⁽⁴²⁾ GUNDRY, *Mark*, 975.

⁽⁴³⁾ P.G. DAVIS, "Mark's Christological Paradox", *JSNT* 35 (1989) 3-18, esp. 11.

to the Latin name *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱός in Greek) which Augustus used to promulgate his filial relationship to Gaius Julius Caesar, which was vital to establish his authority as the son and the legitimate heir of Gaius Julius. In the light of background information concerning how the name *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱός) was used in the context of the Roman imperial cult it seems reasonable to assume that the similarity in diction and the circumstances under which the confession was made are more than mere coincidence or grammatical error on the part of the Markan author. The background information available on the diction employed in the incipit of the Gospel of Mark seems to suggest that the usage of the phrase that echoes the language of the Roman imperial cult in both 1,1 and 15,39 was deliberate and the phrase υἱός θεοῦ must have challenged the intended Markan readers who were probably familiar with the practices of the state cult.

Imagining what assumptions Mark's readers were likely to have had about a Roman centurion is a moot point that cannot settle the question why this centurion reacted the way he did. Speculating about the course of action of one individual centurion on the basis of generalized data about Roman centurions as a whole does not appear to be a sound method. It also seems improbable that Mark would fabricate a saying as important as the confession in Mark 15,39 and yet credit it to a figure so insignificant and unlikely as a nameless Roman centurion. I agree with Johnson, however, that studying the cultural disposition of New Testament readers toward key characters in the Gospel stories might help us to understand the assumptions behind them in new and fresh ways.

Considering the possible connection between the anarthrous υἱός θεοῦ and *divi filius* (or θεοῦ υἱός), the name of Augustus, the centurion's confession comes across as a statement even more daring than it did previously. As Evans has argued, to those who read the Gospel of Mark in the late 60's CE, when the Roman empire seemed to have reached its nadir shortly after Nero's death, Mark's use of the title υἱός θεοῦ must have had a great impact upon them, because not only did the name echo the language of Roman emperor worship but it also directly challenged the most revered figure of the cult — the emperor Augustus himself — in contrast to the dismal reality at the time. It is probable that the centurion did not have a clear grasp of the full implications of his simple yet significant statement as, for example, Caiaphas did not (John 11,49-

52). But to the author of the Gospel of Mark there was no doubt that the centurion confirmed the divine sonship of Jesus, marking the climax of the narrative.

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SUMMARY

This article points up evidence by which the language of the Roman imperial cult might help make clearer what a reader of Mark's Gospel might understand when the centurion (Mark 15,39) refers to Jesus as υἱὸς θεοῦ. Knowing how an audience familiar with this cult language would react, Mark intentionally speaks of Jesus as υἱὸς θεοῦ at 1,1, as well as at 15,39.

Wohnten die Rechabiter in Jerusalem in Häusern oder in Zelten? Die Verbformationen in Jer 35,8-11 (*)

I. Problemstellung ⁽¹⁾

Nach Jer 35 versucht Jeremia im Auftrag JHWHs, die Rechabiter zum Weintrinken zu "verführen" (V. 1-5). Sie weisen jedoch das Ansinnen Jeremias zurück und begründen dies damit, daß alle Gebote, die ihr Ahnherr Jonadab rund 250 Jahre vorher⁽²⁾ seinen Kindern⁽³⁾ und deren Nachkommen auferlegt hat, auch für sie gültig sind; ferner teilen sie dem Propheten mit, daß sie die Gebote ihres Ahnherrn stets befolgt und bloß wegen des heranziehenden babylonisch-aramäischen Heeres (597 v. Chr.) in Jerusalem Schutz gesucht haben (V. 6-11). Allerdings gibt ihr Aufenthalt in Jerusalem Anlaß zu der Frage, ob sie auch in der judäischen Residenzstadt das Gebot ihres Ahnherrn, in Zelten zu wohnen, (V. 7b) eingehalten oder ob sie nicht vielleicht in Häusern gewohnt haben.

(*) Für die Lektüre einer früheren Form des Manuskripts und für wichtige Anregungen danke ich Herrn Prof. G. Vanoni SVD (St. Gabriel-Mödling). Ich widme diesen Aufsatz in Dankbarkeit Frau Dir. Johanna Kirchmayer.

⁽¹⁾ Die syntaktische Analyse basiert auf W. RICHTER, *Grundlagen einer althebräischen Grammatik* 1: A. *Grundfragen einer sprachwissenschaftlichen Grammatik*. B. *Die Beschreibungsebenen*. I. *Das Wort (Morphologie)* (ATSAT 8; St. Ottilien 1978); 2: B. *Die Beschreibungsebenen*. II. *Die Wortfügung (Morphosyntax)* (ATSAT 10; St. Ottilien 1979); 3: B. *Die Beschreibungsebenen*. III. *Der Satz (Satztheorie)* (ATSAT 13; St. Ottilien 1980); DERS., *Untersuchungen zur Valenz althebräischer Verben* 1: 'RK (ATSAT 23; St. Ottilien 1985) 10-26. Ich gebrauche, von den Bezeichnungen der Verbformationen (s. unten Anm. 11) abgesehen, traditionelle grammatische Termini. Die Sätze jedes Verses werden nach W. RICHTER, *Biblia Hebraica transcripta*: BH¹; das ist das ganze Alte Testament transkribiert, mit Satzeinteilungen versehen und durch die Version tiberisch-masoretischer Autoritäten bereichert, auf der sie gründet 8: *Jeremia* (ATSAT 33.8; St. Ottilien 1993) durch Kleinbuchstaben bezeichnet; Abweichungen: (1) 8aI statt 8aRI; s. unten Anm. 21; (2) 10d (Vergleichssatz) statt 10cR (Relativsatz); vgl. Abschnitt III. Das Sigel "V." steht nur vor Vers- und Versteilbezeichnungen.

⁽²⁾ Vgl. 2 Kön 10,15-16.

⁽³⁾ Vgl. W. L. HOLLADAY, *Jeremiah 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 26-52* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis 1989) 248a-b.

Die Exegeten beantworten diese Frage von dem Ausdruck *bêt hārēkābîm* ("das Haus der Rechabiter") V. 2 her. So entscheiden sich z. B. R. P. Carroll und W. L. Holladay⁽⁴⁾ für die wörtliche Bedeutung "das (Wohn-)Haus der Rechabiter", J. Bright, J. A. Thompson und W. McKane⁽⁵⁾ aber für die übertragene Bedeutung "die Gemeinschaft der Rechabiter". Während jedoch nach Bright die Rechabiter in Häusern lebten, hatten sie nach Thompson ihre Zelte innerhalb der Mauern Jerusalems und nach McKane ("Jeremiah") auf freien Plätzen in der Stadt aufgeschlagen; McKane (*Commentary*) zufolge aber standen die Zelte auf freien Plätzen rund um die Stadt herum.

Wie die einander widersprechenden Deutungen zeigen, kann der Ausdruck *bêt hārēkābîm* weder die These, die Rechabiter hätten in der judäischen Residenzstadt in Zelten, noch die These, sie hätten in ihr in einem Haus oder in Häusern gelebt, abstützen. Tatsächlich ist *bayit*, wie eine Analyse des V. 2 nahelegt, eher in der übertragenen Bedeutung "Gemeinschaft" als in der wörtlichen Bedeutung "Haus" gebraucht⁽⁶⁾, und die Rechabiter können als Gemeinschaft in Häusern oder in Zelten gewohnt haben.

⁽⁴⁾ M.D. CARROLL, *Jeremiah: A Commentary* (London 1986) 651-652; HOLLADAY, *Jeremiah*, 247a.

⁽⁵⁾ J. BRIGHT, *Jeremiah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; Garden City, New York 1965) 189; THOMPSON, *The Book of Jeremiah* (NIC; Grand Rapids, Mich. 1980) 616 (vgl. S. 614 Anm. 1); W. MCKANE, "Jeremiah and the Rechabites", *ZAW* 100 Supplement (1988) 116 (Anm. 27); DERS., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah II: Commentary on Jeremiah XXVI-LII* (ICC; Edinburgh 1996) 895.

⁽⁶⁾ Für die Interpretation ist ausschlaggebend, ob die enklitischen Personalpronomen 3 *p m pl* in 2b, 2c und 2d auf das *nomen regens bêt* oder auf das *nomen rectum hārēkābîm* zurückverweisen. Für die erste Möglichkeit ("das Haus [= die Gemeinschaft] der Rechabiter") spricht, daß sich die enklitischen Pronomen wegen ihrer Pluralform auf die übertragene, kollektive Bedeutung von *bayit* beziehen lassen (vgl. z. B. Ez 3,4); vgl. P. JOÜON, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Translated and Revised by T. MURAOKA II: Part Three: Syntax Paradigms and Indices (SubBi 14/II; Roma 1991) § 149b. Gegen die zweite Möglichkeit ("das [Wohn-]Haus der Rechabiter") spricht, daß sich die enklitischen Pronomen nur um den Preis einer harten Spannung auf *hārēkābîm* beziehen lassen. Jeremia soll mit den Leuten, die in dem Haus wohnen, d. h. mit den Rechabitern, reden, sie in den Tempel führen und ihnen Wein zu trinken geben. Doch müßte in diesem Fall in 2b statt *'ôtām* (inkorrekt für *'ittām*; vgl. GK § 103b) wohl *'et hārēkābîm* stehen. Auf diesen Ausdruck würden dann die enklitischen Pronomen in 2c und 2d zurückverweisen; also (hypothetisch): "Geh zu dem Haus der Rechabiter, rede mit *den Rechabitern*, führ sie in das Haus JHWHs, in eine der Hallen, und gib ihnen Wein zu trinken!"

Zwischen den V. 10 und 11 (in der Antwort der Rechabiter) gibt es einen inhaltlichen Gegensatz: Die Rechabiter teilen Jeremia mit, sie hätten in Zelten gewohnt (V. 10); wegen des heranziehenden babylonischen Heeres aber hätten sie sich in Jerusalem niedergelassen (V. 11). Die Exegeten begründen die Existenz des V. 11 damit, daß die Rechabiter erklären mußten, weshalb sie sich in der Stadt aufhielten⁽⁷⁾. McKane⁽⁸⁾ zufolge ist die Information des V. 11 allerdings überflüssig, da Jeremia und die Jerusalemer gewiß gewußt haben, weshalb die Rechabiter in der Stadt ("Jeremiah")/in der Stadt und rund um sie herum (*Commentary*) anzutreffen waren. Niemand wäre daher auf den Gedanken gekommen, die Rechabiter hätten sich für die städtische und gegen die nomadische Lebensweise entschieden. Für Carroll⁽⁹⁾ ist der Gegensatz zwischen den V. 10 und 11 ein "Nebenhinweis" darauf, daß die Rechabiter in Jerusalem in einem Haus gewohnt haben. Ferner hielt z. B. bereits A. B. Ehrlich⁽¹⁰⁾ fest, daß die Existenz des V. 11 und der inhaltliche Gegensatz zwischen den V. 10 und 11 dagegen sprechen, daß die Rechabiter in Jerusalem in Zelten gewohnt haben.

Kann aus dem inhaltlichen Gegensatz zwischen den V. 10 und 11 abgeleitet werden, daß die Rechabiter in der jüdischen Residenzstadt in Häusern gelebt haben? Um diese These zu erhärten oder zu widerlegen, gehe ich folgenden zwei Fragen nach: In welcher Funktion sind die Verbformationen⁽¹¹⁾ in den V. 8-11 gebraucht? In welchen Beziehungen stehen die Sätze der V. 8-11 zueinander? Die Analyse beschränkt sich auf das, was unbedingt gesagt werden muß.

(7) Z. B. CARROLL, *Jeremiah*, 654-655, MCKANE, *Commentary*, 897-898.

(8) "Jeremiah", 118, DERS., *Commentary*, 897.

(9) *Jeremiah*, 651-652.

(10) *Randglossen zur Hebräischen Bibel: Textkritisches, Sprachliches und Sachliches IV: Jesaja, Jeremia* (Leipzig 1912) 332.

(11) Zu den Funktionen der Verbformationen s. H. IRSIGLER, *Einführung in das Biblische Hebräisch I*: Ausgewählte Abschnitte der althebräischen Grammatik (ATSAT 9; St. Ottilien 1978), 79-80, 160-161; RICHTER, *Grammatik* 3, 216-222; W. GROSS, "OTTO RÖSSLER und die Diskussion um das althebräische Verbalsystem", *BN* 18 (1982) 62-68. Zu den Einzelheiten muß auf die angeführten Arbeiten verwiesen sein. Die Konjugationsart der finiten Verbform wird als grammatisches Zeichen geschrieben (vgl. IRSIGLER, S. 79): *qatal* = Suffixkonjugation, *yiqtol-KF/LF* = Präfixkonjugation-Kurzform/Langform, *wayyiqtol* = *wa*=Präfixkonjugation-Kurzform (das sogenannte *imperfectum consecutivum*). In den Formationsbezeichnungen (*w=*)*x-qatal* und (*w=*)*x-yiqtol* zeigt *x* an, daß dem Verb ein oder mehrere Wörter vorausgehen. Die Konjunktion *w=*/*wa*= nimmt keine Position im Satz ein.

II. Verse 8-9

8a *wannišma' b^eqôl y^ehônādāb ben-rēkāb 'ābînû l'kôl*

8aR *'āšer šiwwānû*

8aI *l^ebiltî š^etôt-yayin kol-yāmênû 'ānaḥnû nāšênû bānênû
ûb^enōtênû*

9vI *ûl^ebiltî b^enôt bāttîm*

9vII *l^ešibtênû*

9a *w^ekerem w^ešādeh wāzera' lō' yīhyeh-lānû*

^{8a} Und so haben wir auf die Stimme unseres Ahnherrn Jehonadab, des Sohnes Rechabs, in allem, ^{8aR} was er uns befohlen hat, gehört, ^{8aI} indem wir unser ganzes Leben lang keinen Wein tranken, wir, unsere Frauen, unsere Söhne und unsere Töchter, ^{9vI} und keine Häuser bauten, ^{9vII} in denen wir hätten wohnen können, ^{9a} und weder Weinberge noch Äcker noch Saatgut besaßen.

Die V. 8-11 stellen einen zweiteiligen Ausführungsbericht zu den V. 6b-7 dar, die die Gebote überliefern, auf die Jonadab seine Kinder und deren Nachkommen verpflichtet hat. Die Befolgung der Verbote (V. 6bβ-7a) ist in den V. 8-9, die Befolgung des Gebots (V. 7b) ist in den V. 10-11 dargestellt. (V. 11 gehört zu dem Ausführungsbericht dazu, da er in bezug auf die Sachverhalte des V. 10 die Funktion einer begrenzenden Zeitdauerangabe ausübt.) Der Ausführungsbericht ist deshalb auf zwei Teile aufgeteilt, weil sich die vergangenen Sachverhalte des V. 10 über einen kürzeren Zeitraum als die vergangenen Sachverhalte der V. 8-9 erstrecken (s. dazu Abschnitt V)(¹²).

Die V. 8-9 bilden den ersten Teil des zweiteiligen Ausführungsberichts. Die Progreßform *wayyiqtol* (Affektverb *šm'* [“hören auf”, “gehorschen”]) ist gewählt, um den Sachverhalt in 8a als Folge des Sachverhalts in 6c(¹³) darzustellen: resumptiver Progreß. 8a wird durch die Konjunktion *wa*= locker an 6c angeschlossen. *wayyiqtol* bezeichnet an sich einen individuellen vergangenen Sachverhalt(¹⁴). In 8a steht diese Verbformation

(¹²) Was die Struktur angeht, so kann Jer 35,5-11 mit 1 Kön 13,7-10 (1 Kön 13: Der ungehorsame Gottesmann) verglichen werden.

(¹³) Der Kausalsatz 6c begründet gemeinsam mit 6d-7fR (= Gebote Jonadabs) die Weigerung der Rechabiter, Wein zu trinken (6b).

(¹⁴) IRSIGLER, *Einführung*, 160, RICHTER, *Grammatik* 3, 218, GROSS, “OTTO RÖSSLER”, 63. Zur Definition der Begriffe “individueller” und “genereller Sachverhalt” s. A. DENZ, *Die Verbalsyntax des neuarabischen Dialektes von*

allerdings in Leerlauffunktion⁽¹⁵⁾ für einen generellen vergangenen Sachverhalt. Dessen Generalität ist aus Folgendem abzuleiten: (1) Der Gehorsam der Rechabiter gegenüber ihrem Ahnherrn basierte darauf, daß dessen Gebote *die Norm* waren, die ihr ganzes bisheriges Leben bestimmt hatte; vgl. die temporale Angabe *kol-yāmēnū* ("unser ganzes Leben lang") in der Infinitivkonstruktion 8aI. (2) Wie die Weigerung der Rechabiter, Wein zu trinken, (V. 6) zeigt, bestimmte diese Norm auch weiterhin das Leben der Rechabiter. Der generelle vergangene Sachverhalt ist nicht unter dem imperfektiven, sondern unter dem perfektiven Aspekt dargestellt⁽¹⁶⁾.

Der Kernsatz von 8a (Prädikat — Subjekt [1 *p pl*] — Präpositionalobjekt) ist durch eine freie modale Umstandsangabe⁽¹⁷⁾ erweitert: Die Rechabiter betonen, daß sich ihr Gehorsam auf *alle* Anweisungen ihres Ahnherrn bezogen hat⁽¹⁸⁾. In die Umstandsangabe

Kwayriš (Irak). Mit einer einleitenden allgemeinen Tempus- und Aspektlehre (AKM 40,1; 1971) 7-8 und N. NEBES, *Funktionsanalyse von kāna yaf'alu*: Ein Beitrag zur Verbalsyntax des Althocharabischen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Tempus- und Aspektproblematik (Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft 1; 1982) 9-25. Zur Anwendung der Definition von DENZ auf das bibelhebräische Verbalsystem s. W. GROSS, *Verbform und Funktion. wayyiqtol für die Gegenwart? Ein Beitrag zur Syntax poetischer althebräischer Texte* (ATSAT 1; St. Ottilien 1976) 4 Anm. 10. Es ist zwischen zwei zeitlich begrenzten Sachverhaltsarten zu unterscheiden: ein- oder mehrmaliger individueller Sachverhalt — genereller Sachverhalt (der als Iterativ und Kontinuativ auftritt [NEBES, S. 12]). Die Generalität eines Sachverhalts hängt nicht von der Wiederholung (Iterativ) oder der Dauer (Kontinuativ) ab, sondern davon, daß dem Sachverhalt ein gesetzmäßiges Prinzip zugrunde liegt und daß er auch für die Zukunft Gültigkeit besitzt (NEBES, *Funktionsanalyse*, 20-22).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Zu dem Terminus "Leerlauffunktion", der von E. KOSCHMIEDER, *Zur Bestimmung der Funktionen grammatischer Kategorien* (ABAW.PH NF Heft 25; München 1945) 10 geprägt wurde, s. GROSS, *Verbform*, 112-115. Die Arbeit von KOSCHMIEDER ist nach GROSS, *Verbform*, 173 zitiert.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Perfektiver Aspekt: Der generelle vergangene Sachverhalt ist, von der *Sprecher-Gegenwart* her gesehen, in seiner ganzen zeitlichen Ausdehnung dargestellt. Imperfektiver Aspekt: Der generelle vergangene Sachverhalt ist, vom *individuellen vergangenen Sachverhalt* her gesehen, in einem noch nicht vollendeten zeitlichen Ablauf dargestellt. (Nach NEBES, *Funktionsanalyse*, 43-44).

⁽¹⁷⁾ Eine freie Umstandsangabe (Circumstantial) ist dem Kernsatz frei hinzugefügt; sie ist von der Verbvalenz nicht gefordert; s. RICHTER, *Grammatik* 3, 142-157. Sie vertritt in der Form "Präposition + *inf cstr*" abhängige Sätze (S. 150).

⁽¹⁸⁾ Dieser Vollständigkeit in der Darstellung entspricht keine Vollständigkeit in der Darstellung von 8aI-9a. Denn die Einhaltung des Gebots, in Zelten zu wohnen, wird eigens genannt und auch eigens als gehorsames

ist der Relativsatz 8aR eingebettet. *x-qatal* (8aR) steht für einen individuellen vergangenen Sachverhalt⁽¹⁹⁾.

Zu dem (erweiterten) Kernsatz tritt die Infinitivkonstruktionsreihe 8aI-9vI samt dem *w=x-yiqtol-LF*-Satz 9a, der die Infinitivkonstruktionsreihe fortführt⁽²⁰⁾, als freie modale Umstandsangabe hinzu. Die Sachverhalte in 8aI-9a, die neutral aufgezählt werden (Befolgung der Verbote 6d-7d), erläutern nämlich die Ausführung des Sachverhalts von 8a(+aR). Sie stehen daher zu diesem Sachverhalt in einer modalen Verhältnisbeziehung und verhalten sich ihm gegenüber gleichzeitig⁽²¹⁾. Da die Verbote Jonadabs *als Norm* das ganze Leben der Rechabiter bestimmten, handelt es sich um generelle vergangene Sachverhalte. Freilich ist der generelle vergangene Sachverhalt nur in 9a syntaktisch ausgedrückt (*w=x-yiqtol-LF* [imperfektiver Aspekt])⁽²²⁾, nicht aber in 8aI und 9vI (*inf cstr*). Die Infinitivkonstruktion 9vII fügt sich als freie kausale (finale) Umstandsangabe mit dem Kernsatz von 9vI. Ihr genereller vergangener Sachverhalt verhält sich gegenüber dem generellen vergangenen Sachverhalt in 9vI nachzeitig.

Handeln charakterisiert (V. 10); s. Abschnitt III. Die Kohärenzstörung läßt den Schluß zu, daß die Umstandsangabe *l'kol 'āšer šiwwānū* ("in allem, was er uns befohlen hat") nicht zum primären Textbestand gehört; vgl. LXX, die ein Minus aufweist; vgl. J.G. JANZEN, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (HSM 6; Cambridge, Mass. 1973) 51. Das text- und literarkritische Problem ist hier nicht weiterzuverfolgen, da in diesem Aufsatz keine umfassende Text- und Literarkritik betrieben werden kann. Daher korrigiere ich den MT nicht (s. jedoch unten Anm. 40). Zur strikten Trennung der Textstränge in der Untersuchung und zur ebenfalls strikten Trennung von Text- und Literarkritik s. G. VANONI, *Literarkritik und Grammatik: Untersuchung der Wiederholungen und Spannungen in 1 Kön 11–12* (ATSAT 21; St. Ottilien 1984) 21-23, 45, 269.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Vgl. IRSIGLER, *Einführung*, 160; RICHTER, *Grammatik* 3, 219; GROSS, "OTTO RÖSSLER", 63.

⁽²⁰⁾ *wayyiqtol* 8a und 10a drückt jeweils resumptiven Progreß zu 6c aus. 10a besitzt deswegen die gleiche Eigenständigkeit wie 8a; s. Abschnitt III. Durch *w=x-yiqtol-LF* 9a aber kann kein resumptiver Progreß bezeichnet werden. 9a wäre daher, als selbständiger Satz gedeutet, zwischen 8a und 10a ein "Fremdkörper".

⁽²¹⁾ Die Verhältnisbeziehung wird fälschlicherweise auch konsekutiv interpretiert; z. B. W. RUDOLPH, *Jeremia* (HAT 12; Tübingen 1968) 226; so bereits die Vg. RICHTER, *Biblia Hebraica*, 324 bezeichnet die Infinitivkonstruktion 8aI als "8aRI". In diesem Fall wäre 8aRI-9a eine indirekte Rede. Doch überzeugt diese Deutung nicht, da sich die indirekte Rede in den Ablauf der Antwort der Rechabiter nicht organisch einfügt.

⁽²²⁾ Vgl. IRSIGLER, *Einführung*, 160; RICHTER, *Grammatik* 3, 219; GROSS, "OTTO RÖSSLER", 65.

III. Vers 10

10a *wannēšeb bo'ōhālīm*

10b *wannišma'*

10c *wanna'aś*

10d *k'kōl 'āšer-šiwwānû yônādāb 'ābînû*

^{10a} Und so haben wir *auch* in Zelten gewohnt ^{10b-c} und *auch dadurch* gehorsam gehandelt, ^{10d} ganz wie uns unser Ahnherr Jonadab befohlen hat.

Die V. 10-11 bilden den zweiten Teil des zweiteiligen Ausführungsberichts (zu V. 11 s. Abschnitt IV). Der Sachverhalt in 10a sollte, vom Sachverhalt in 8a her beurteilt, an die neutrale Aufzählung der Sachverhalte in 8aI-9a anschließen, was aber nicht möglich ist, da er selbst durch die Sachverhalte in 10b-d näher bestimmt wird. Da aber auch die Handlung von dem *wayyiqtol*-Satz 8a zu dem *wayyiqtol*-Satz 10a nicht fortschreitet, verläuft zwischen den V. 8-9 und 10 eine Zäsur. Die Annahme liegt nahe, daß die Progreßform *wayyiqtol* 10a aus dem gleichen Grund wie die Progreßform *wayyiqtol* 8a gewählt ist. Der Sachverhalt in 10a wird demnach wie der Sachverhalt in 8a als Folge des Sachverhalts in 6c dargestellt: resumptiver Progreß. 10a eignet daher in bezug auf 6c die gleiche Eigenständigkeit wie 8a. 10a wird daher auch wie 8a durch die Konjunktion *wa*= locker an 6c angefügt. Dies schließt jedoch keinesfalls eine lose Und-Verbindung zwischen den zwei Sachverhaltsreihen V. 8-9 und 10-11 aus⁽²³⁾, da es sich bei den V. 8-9 um den ersten und bei den V. 10-11 um den zweiten Teil des zweiteiligen Ausführungsberichts handelt.

Mit den V. 8-9 und 10 stehen zwei Sachverhaltsreihen nebeneinander, die inhaltlich voneinander unabhängig sind. Deshalb werden die Sachverhalte in 8aI-9a um den Sachverhalt in 10a erweitert, und der Sachverhalt in 8a wird deshalb um die Sachverhalte in 10b-d erweitert. Freilich ist die Erweiterung im hebräischen Text nicht ausgedrückt⁽²⁴⁾.

10b und 10c sind Einwortsätze, die das gleiche Subjekt wie 10a

⁽²³⁾ In einigen Übersetzungen wird 10a durch eine adversative Konjunktion eröffnet (wahrscheinlich um einen Gegensatz zu 9a anzuzeigen, den es aber nicht gibt); z. B. CARROLL, *Jeremiah*, 651; so bereits die Vg (Angleichung an 7e).

⁽²⁴⁾ In der deutschsprachigen Übersetzung läßt sich die Erweiterung durch die Zufügung des Modaladverbs "auch" kennzeichnen.

haben. Aus diesem Grund — also nicht, weil irgendeine Art von Folge zu bezeichnen wäre — sind sie in *wayyiqtol* formuliert⁽²⁵⁾. Die zwei Verben *šmʿ* (“gehorschen”) (10b) und *ʿšh* (“handeln”) (10c) bilden eine Begriffseinheit (Hendiadyoin); der Inhalt des zweiten Verbs wird durch den Inhalt des ersten Verbs qualifiziert: “gehorschen und handeln” = “gehorsam handeln”⁽²⁶⁾.

10b ist mit 10a, 10c ist mit 10b syndetisch gefügt. Die syndetische Fügung von 10c mit 10b erklärt sich daraus, daß die Begriffseinheit “gehorsam handeln” auf die zwei Sätze 10b und 10c aufgeteilt ist. Dagegen leitet sich die syndetische Fügung von 10b mit 10a daraus ab, daß sich die Sachverhalte in 10b-d auf den Sachverhalt in 10a beziehen. Es handelt sich nämlich um eine modale Verhältnisbeziehung, die allerdings nicht wie die modale Verhältnisbeziehung V. 8-9 formal ausgedrückt ist. Vielmehr sind die aufeinander bezogenen Sachverhalte in selbständigen Sätzen formuliert. Freilich sind in der Satzverbindung 10a-c die Sachverhalte obligatorisch in umgekehrter Reihenfolge angeordnet⁽²⁷⁾. Die modale Verhältnisbeziehung ist wahrscheinlich deshalb als Satzverbindung stilisiert, weil die Sachverhalte in 10a, 10b und 10c gleich stark betont werden sollen.

10d ist ein Vergleichssatz. Zwischen 10b-c (Hendiadyoin) und 10d besteht nämlich eine Vergleichsbeziehung, die durch die Konjunktion *kʿkōl ʿāšer* (“ganz wie”)⁽²⁸⁾ angezeigt ist⁽²⁹⁾. *x-qatal* 10d steht für einen individuellen vergangenen Sachverhalt.

⁽²⁵⁾ Vgl. GROSS, *Verbform*, 164.

⁽²⁶⁾ Z. B. RUDOLPH, *Jeremia*, 226; so bereits die Vg.

⁽²⁷⁾ Um es anhand der deutschsprachigen Übersetzung zu verdeutlichen:

- Und so haben wir in Zelten gewohnt und gehorsam gehandelt, ganz wie uns unser Ahnherr Jonadab befohlen hat.
- Und so haben wir in Zelten gewohnt und *dadurch* gehorsam gehandelt, ganz wie uns unser Ahnherr Jonadab befohlen hat.
- Und so haben wir *dadurch* gehorsam gehandelt, daß wir in Zelten wohnten — ganz wie uns unser Ahnherr Jonadab befohlen hat.
- Und so haben wir gehorsam gehandelt, indem wir in Zelten wohnten — ganz wie uns unser Ahnherr Jonadab befohlen hat.

⁽²⁸⁾ Zu dieser Vergleichskonjunktion s. E. JENNI, *Die hebräischen Präpositionen II: Die Präposition Kaph* (Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln 1994) 19-20, 133-134.

⁽²⁹⁾ 10b-d weist nach, daß der vergangene Sachverhalt in 10a dem Befehl Jonadabs V. 7b entsprochen hat. In der eingesehenen Literatur wird 10b-d als abschließende Feststellung verstanden: daß die Rechabiter alle Anweisungen Jonadabs erfüllt haben bzw. erfüllen; so auch C. KNIGHTS, “Who were the

Die Rechabiter beschreiben, daß sie in Zelten gewohnt (10a) und *dadurch* — entsprechend dem Gebot ihres Ahnherrn (7e) — gehorsam gehandelt haben (10b-d). Dieses Gebot bestimmte also, wie die Rechabiter zu wohnen hatten. *wayyiqtol* 10a (perfektisches Verb *yšb* [“sich niederlassen”, “wohnen”]), 10b (Affektverb *šmʿ* [“gehorsamen”]) und 10c (Aktionsverb *ʿśh* [“handeln”]) steht daher jeweils in Leerlauffunktion für einen generellen vergangenen Sachverhalt⁽³⁰⁾. In 10a ist ein perfektischer Sachverhalt mitgemeint⁽³¹⁾. Die generellen vergangenen Sachverhalte sind unter dem perfektiven Aspekt dargestellt.

IV. Vers 11

11a *wayʿhî*

11aI *baʿālôt nʿbûkadreʿššar melek-bābel ʿel-hāʾāreš*

11b *wannōʾmer*

11c *bōʾû*

11d *wʿnābôʾ yʿrûšālēm mippʿnê ḥêl hakkašdîm ûmippʿnê ḥêl ʾārām*

11e *wannēšeb bîrûšālēm*

^{11a+al} Als aber Nebukadnezar, der König von Babel, gegen das Land heraufzog, ^{11b} da haben wir gesagt: ^{11c} Kommt, ^{11d} wir wollen wegen des Heeres der Chaldäer und wegen des Heeres der Aramäer nach Jerusalem hineingehen! ^{11e} Und so haben wir uns in Jerusalem niedergelassen.

Rechabites”, *ExpTim* 107 (1995/6) 140a. Selten begegnet auch die Interpretation, daß 10b-c eine Begleithandlung zu der Handlung von 10a bietet (modale Verhältnisbeziehung); z. B. BRIGHT, *Jeremiah*, 187.

(³⁰) Es handelt sich trotz dem, daß sie durch die Flucht der Rechabiter nach Jerusalem ihr Ende fanden (s. Abschnitt V), um generelle Sachverhalte. Hatten die Rechabiter doch nie etwas anderes geplant, als das Gebot ihres Ahnherrn, in Zelten zu wohnen, stets einzuhalten. Daß sie es nicht mehr einhielten, lag ja nicht an ihnen, sondern an einem äußeren, von ihnen nicht zu beeinflussenden Geschehen. Individuell wären die Sachverhalte, wenn die Rechabiter geplant hätten, nur eine gewisse Zeit lang in Zelten zu leben; vgl. NEBES, *Funktionsanalyse*, 22-24, der auf Grenzfälle eingeht, die sich aus der Verbindung von Verbalbegriffen wie “leben” oder “bleiben” mit einer begrenzenden Zeitdauerangabe ergeben.

(³¹) Vgl. GROSS, *Verbform*, 116: “Innerhalb des perfektischen Sachverhalts, für den Suffixkonjugation — und bei Progreß *wayyiqtol* — steht, kann das Hebräische ... syntaktisch und morphologisch weder Gegenwart — Vergangenheit noch generell — individuell differenzieren. Formal ausgedrückt ist immer der individuelle vergangene Sachverhalt.”

11a+aI (*way'hî* + temporales Circumstant) und 11b (*wayyiqtol* für individuellen vergangenen Sachverhalt) sind selbständige Sätze⁽³²⁾. Die Satzverbindung vertritt ein temporales Satzgefüge der Gleichzeitigkeit. Das Prädikat in 11b (*verbum dicendi*) bindet kraft seiner satzübergreifenden Valenz⁽³³⁾ die Sätze 11c-d als direkte Rede an sich⁽³⁴⁾. *yšb* ("sich niederlassen", "wohnen") 11e ist ein perfektisches Verb. *wayyiqtol* kann daher den individuellen vergangenen Sachverhalt bezeichnen: "Und so haben wir uns in Jerusalem niedergelassen"(Vorgang); oder es kann für den perfektischen Sachverhalt stehen: "Und so wohnen wir in Jerusalem"(Ergebnis). In letzterem Fall handelt es sich wohl um einen individuellen gegenwärtigen perfektischen Sachverhalt, da die Rechabiter wahrscheinlich beabsichtigten, nur vorübergehend in Jerusalem zu wohnen⁽³⁵⁾. Die Progreßform ist vielleicht gewählt, um den Sachverhalt in 11e als Folge des Sachverhalts in V. 11c-d (Selbstaufforderung der Rechabiter) darzustellen: resumptiver Progreß. Sie kann aber auch bloß deshalb gewählt sein, weil der Handlungsfortschritt von 10b zu 10e bezeichnet werden soll ("Und wir haben uns in Jerusalem niedergelassen").

V. Der Aufenthalt der Rechabiter in Jerusalem

Alle generellen vergangenen Sachverhalte, die in den V. 8-10 dargestellt sind, hatten einen gemeinsamen Beginn in der Vergangenheit⁽³⁶⁾. Freilich läßt sich dieser Beginn nicht präzisieren, da jeder Rechabiter zu einer anderen Zeit geboren wurde. Die Sachverhalte der V. 8-9 und 10 verliefen wegen ihres gemeinsamen Beginns parallel — allerdings nur eine gewisse Zeit lang, da sie keinen gemeinsamen Endpunkt hatten. Die Sachverhalte in den V.

⁽³²⁾ Vgl. G. VANONI, "Ist die Fügung *HYY* + Circumstant der Zeit im Althebräischen ein Satz?", *BN* 17 (1982) 78-79; W. GROSS, *Die Pendenskonstruktion im Biblischen Hebräisch: Studien zum althebräischen Satz I* (ATSAT 27; St. Ottilien 1987) 70-71. Zu VANONI s. GROSS, S. 71.

⁽³³⁾ Vgl. RICHTER, *Untersuchungen*, 24.

⁽³⁴⁾ 11c-d überliefert die Selbstaufforderung der Rechabiter, vor der herannahenden Kriegsgefahr in Jerusalem Schutz zu suchen.

⁽³⁵⁾ Generell wäre der Sachverhalt, wenn die Rechabiter beschlossen hätten, das Gebot ihres Ahnherrn nicht mehr zu beachten und für immer in Jerusalem zu bleiben; vgl. NEBES, *Funktionsanalyse*, 22-24; vgl. oben Anm. 30.

⁽³⁶⁾ Davon ausgenommen ist lediglich der generelle vergangene Sachverhalt in 9vII, der sich gegenüber dem Sachverhalt in 9vI nachzeitig verhält.

8-9 erstreckten sich nämlich, wie die temporale Angabe *kol-yāmênû* ("unser ganzes Leben lang") (8aI) zeigt, bis zu dem Augenblick, als die Rechabiter Jeremia antworteten (6a: Sprecher-Gegenwart). Dagegen fanden die Sachverhalte in V. 10 bereits früher ihr Ende, nämlich in dem Augenblick, als die Rechabiter ihren Beschluß verwirklichten, nach Jerusalem hineinzugehen. Wird doch die zeitliche Erstreckung der Sachverhalte in 10a-c durch den V. 11 beendet, der wie eine begrenzende Zeitdauerangabe wirkt⁽³⁷⁾.

10c und 11a+aI sind syndetisch gefügt. Über diese zwei Sätze werden die zwei Sachverhaltsreihen V. 10 und 11 miteinander verknüpft, da die Und-Verbindung unter dem semantischen Aspekt eine Aber-Verbindung vertritt⁽³⁸⁾. Die Sachverhaltsreihen V. 10 und 11 stehen nämlich in einem inhaltlich gegensätzlichen Verhältnis zueinander: [+ konzessiv] : [+ adversativ]. Freilich ist das konzessive Pendant zu der adversativen Sachverhaltsreihe V. 11 nicht vollständig formuliert, da die Satzverbindung 10a-d bloß für 11e eine Entsprechung bereitstellt. Deshalb müssen eine Redeankündigung, die mit der Redeankündigung 11b korrespondiert, und eine Aufforderung, die mit der Selbstaufforderung der Rechabiter 11c-d korrespondiert, selbst aber keine Selbstaufforderung zu sein braucht, aus dem Kontext ergänzt werden. Doch muß auch berücksichtigt werden, daß zwischen den Sachverhaltsreihen V. 8-9 und 10 eine Zäsur verläuft und daß die Sachverhalte der V. 8-9 deshalb um die Sachverhalte des V. 10 erweitert werden. Unter diesen Aspekten sind die Sätze 6c und 7e-fR in modifizierter Form als den V. 10-11 vorausgehend zu ergänzen:

- 6a Sie aber sagten:
- 6b Wir trinken keinen Wein!
- 6c Denn unser Ahnherr Jonadab, der Sohn Rechabs, hat uns befohlen:
- 6d Ihr sollt niemals Wein trinken, ihr und eure Kinder!
- 7a Ihr sollt kein Haus bauen,

⁽³⁷⁾ Die Zeitdauerangabe in 8aI gilt nur für die Sachverhalte in den V. 8-9. Sie wird durch den V. 11 rückwirkend für die Sachverhalte in V. 10 außer Kraft gesetzt; vgl. H. WEINRICH, *Tempus: Besprochene und erzählte Welt* (Stuttgart - Berlin - Köln - Mainz ³1977) 11-14.

⁽³⁸⁾ Vgl. W. GROSS, *Die Satzteilfolge im Verbalsatz alttestamentlicher Prosa*. Untersucht an den Büchern Dtn, Ri und 2Kön (FAT 17; Tübingen 1996) 96-97.

- 7b keine Saat aussäen,
 7c keinen Weinberg pflanzen,
 7d und keinen (Weinberg)⁽³⁹⁾ besitzen!
 7e In Zelten sollt ihr vielmehr euer ganzes Leben lang
 wohnen,
 7f damit ihr lange lebt in dem Land,
 7fR in dem ihr euch als Fremde aufhaltet!
 8a₁ Und so haben wir auf die Stimme unseres Ahnherrn Jeho-
 nadab, des Sohnes Rechabs, in allem,
 8aR was er uns befohlen hat⁽⁴⁰⁾,
 8a₂ gehört,
 8aI indem wir unser ganzes Leben lang keinen Wein tranken,
 wir, unsere Frauen, unsere Söhne und unsere Töchter,
 9vI und keine Häuser bauten,
 9vII in denen wir hätten wohnen können,
 9a und weder Weinberge noch Äcker noch Saatgut besaßen.
*(Zwar hat uns, wie erwähnt, unser Ahnherr Jonadab, der
 Sohn Rechabs, auch befohlen,
 unser ganzes Leben lang in Zelten zu wohnen,
 damit wir lange leben in dem Land,
 in dem wir uns als Fremde aufhalten).*
 10a Und so haben wir *auch* in Zelten gewohnt
 10b-c und *auch* *dadurch* gehorsam gehandelt,
 10d ganz wie uns unser Ahnherr Jonadab befohlen hat.
 11a+aI Als aber Nebukadnezar, der König von Babel, gegen das
 Land heraufzog,

⁽³⁹⁾ (1) Das getilgte Subjekt von 7d kann nach 7c nicht ersetzt werden, da *kerem* ("Weinberg") in 7c Objekt ist. (2) 7d sollte wie 7a, 7b und 7c durch ein nominales Satzglied eröffnet sein. (Die Erstplacierung der nominalen Satzglieder zeigt an, daß neutral aufgezählt wird; vgl. GROSS, *Satzteilfolge*, 98.) Die zwei Kohärenzstörungen erlauben das literarkritische Urteil, daß *lō'-tiṭṭā'û w^c* ("nicht sollt ihr pflanzen und") (7c) später eingefügt wurde; vgl. 7dLXX: καὶ ἀμπελῶν οὐκ ἔσται ὑμῖν ("und ihr sollt keinen Weinberg besitzen"); 7c fehlt in der LXX; vgl. JANZEN, *Studies*, 51. Ich korrigiere den MT nicht; s. oben Anm. 18.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ In diesem Aufsatz betreibe ich keine Literarkritik; s. oben Anm. 18. Dennoch berücksichtige ich den Ausdruck *l'kōl 'āšer šiwwānû* ("in allem, was er uns befohlen hat") für die Überlegungen zum Aufenthalt der Rechabiter in Jerusalem nicht. Der Ausdruck wurde später zugefügt (s. Anm. 18) und widerspricht genaugenommen der kompletten Darstellung von 8aI-11e. Eine Berücksichtigung würde nur die Analyse verzerren.

- 11b da haben wir gesagt.
 11c Kommt,
 11d wir wollen ... nach Jerusalem hineingehen!
 11e Und so haben wir uns in Jerusalem niedergelassen.

Die Rechabiter räumen ein: Sie haben *auch* in Zelten gewohnt und *auch dadurch* entsprechend dem Gebot ihres Ahnherrn gehandelt, und zwar deshalb, weil es ihnen ihr Ahnherr *auch* befohlen hat. Diesen eingeräumten Sachverhalten stellen die Rechabiter die Sachverhalte des V. 11 gegenüber.

Aus dem Erweiterungscharakter, der dem V. 10 in bezug auf die V. 8-9 eigen ist, und aus dem inhaltlich gegensätzlichen Verhältnis, das es zwischen den V. 10 und 11 gibt, ist Dreierlei abzuleiten:

(1) Die Rechabiter ersetzen den Befehl ihres Ahnherrn, stets in Zelten zu wohnen, durch ihre Selbstaufforderung, nach Jerusalem hineinzugehen⁽⁴¹⁾.

(2) Ihr Aufenthalt in Zelten außerhalb Jerusalems wurde durch ihren Aufenthalt in Jerusalem abgelöst⁽⁴²⁾.

(3) V. 11 übt, wie oben erwähnt, in bezug auf die Sachverhalte in V. 10 die Funktion einer begrenzenden Zeitdauerangabe aus. Da 10a und 10b-c in einer formal nicht ausgedrückten modalen Verhältnisbeziehung zueinander stehen, wird durch den V. 11 nicht nur die Andauer des vergangenen Sachverhalts in 10a, sondern auch die Andauer der vergangenen Sachverhalte in 10b und 10c beendet. Anders gesagt: Die Rechabiter brachen infolge ihres Beschlusses, nach Jerusalem hineinzugehen, nicht nur ihre Zelte ab; sie setzten

⁽⁴¹⁾ Das inhaltlich gegensätzliche Verhältnis wird dadurch betont, daß in der Satzreihe 11a-b das Prädikat von 11b samt der Selbstaufforderung der Rechabiter (11c-d) hervorgehoben wird. In einem Pendenssatz (dieser Terminus wurde von GROSS, *Pendenskonstruktion*, 38 geprägt; zur Definition s. S. 38-39), in dem eine Zeitangabe der Form "Präposition + *inf cstr*" pendiert (s. dazu S. 45-48), ist nicht die pendierende Zeitangabe, sondern das in *wayyiqtol* formulierte Verb, das auf das Pendens folgt, betont (S. 47-48). Dies gilt wohl auch für die Konstruktion, in der die Zeitangabe wegen der Fügung mit *wayhî* nicht pendiert; vgl. S. 47, wo GROSS hervorhebt, daß die Fügung von *wayhî* und Zeitangabe keine Betonung der Zeitangabe bewirkt.

⁽⁴²⁾ Man beachte, daß die Sachverhaltsreihe V. 10-11 mit einer Angabe zum "Wohnort" der Rechabiter beginnt (10a: *wannēšeb bo'ōhālīm* ["Und so haben wir in Zelten gewohnt"]) und mit einer Angabe zum "Wohnort" der Rechabiter abschließt (11e: *wannēšeb bîrûšālēm* ["Und so haben wir uns in Jerusalem niedergelassen"]/"Und so wohnen wir in Jerusalem"); vgl. EHRLICH, *Randglossen*, 332.

auch ihren Gehorsam gegenüber dem Gebot ihres Ahnherrn, stets in Zelten zu wohnen, aus.

11e enthält keinen Hinweis darauf, ob die Rechabiter in Jerusalem in Zelten oder in Häusern gewohnt haben. Freilich läßt gerade die Abwesenheit eines solchen Hinweises vermuten, daß sie sich an das städtische Leben angepaßt und in Häusern, nicht aber in Zelten gelebt haben. Genausowenig wie sie hervorzuheben brauchten, daß die Zelte, in denen sie gelebt hatten, irgendwo in der Weite des judäischen Landes aufgeschlagen gewesen waren, genauso wenig brauchten sie zu betonen, daß sie in der judäischen Residenzstadt in Häusern wohnten⁽⁴³⁾. Hätten die Rechabiter aber irgendwo in der Residenzstadt ihre Zelte aufgeschlagen und dadurch signalisiert, daß sie auch in ihr das Gebot ihres Ahnherrn, in Zelten zu wohnen, einhielten, so wäre wohl zu erwarten, daß die Zelte in 11e auch erwähnt würden⁽⁴⁴⁾, und zwar gerade deshalb, weil V. 11 in bezug auf die ganze Sachverhaltsreihe des V. 10 die Funktion einer begrenzenden Zeitdauerangabe ausübt.

Es muß aber auch gefragt werden⁽⁴⁵⁾: Konnten die Rechabiter, wie manche Exegeten meinen (Thompson, McKane)⁽⁴⁶⁾, tatsächlich in Jerusalem ihre Zelte aufgeschlagen haben⁽⁴⁷⁾? Im 7. Jh. v. Chr. lebten rund 20 000 Menschen in der judäischen Residenzstadt⁽⁴⁸⁾. Zu Beginn des 6. Jh. v. Chr. waren es wahrscheinlich kaum weniger. Gab es denn im Jerusalem des Jahres 597 v. Chr. überhaupt entsprechend große freie Plätze⁽⁴⁹⁾? Wenn man dann noch bedenkt,

(43) Sollten die Rechabiter tatsächlich "stadtbekannt" gewesen sein, so wußten die Jerusalemer ohnehin, daß sie in Häusern wohnten. Die Rechabiter brauchten dies also gar nicht eigens zu erwähnen.

(44) So zurecht CARROLL, *Jeremiah*, 652.

(45) Für die Anregung, auf der die Überlegungen in diesem Absatz basieren, danke ich Herrn Prof. G. Braulik OSB.

(46) THOMPSON, *Jeremiah*, 616; MCKANE, "Jeremiah", 116.

(47) Vgl. EHRLICH, *Randglossen*, 332.

(48) E. OTTO, *Jerusalem — die Geschichte der Heiligen Stadt: Von den Anfängen bis zur Kreuzfahrerzeit* (Urban-Taschenbücher 308; Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln-Mainz 1980) 74-75.

(49) H. SCHMIDT, *Die großen Propheten*. Übersetzt und erklärt. Mit Einleitungen versehen von H. Gunkel (SAT II,2; Göttingen 1923) 310 merkt zu der These, daß die Rechabiter auf freien Plätzen in Jerusalem ihre Zelte aufgeschlagen haben, an: "wie man es gleichfalls heute gelegentlich von Beduinen sehen kann." (Zitiert nach M. J. MULDER, *De Rekabieten in Jeremia 35: Fictie, secte of stroming?* [SKC 68; Kampen 1990] 23 Anm. 27, der SCHMIDT zustimmt.) Kann von den Möglichkeiten zu Beginn unseres Jahrhunderts auf den Beginn des 6. Jh. v. Chr. zurückgeschlossen werden?

daß auch andere Leute aus dem judäischen Land⁽⁵⁰⁾ und vor allem auch die außerhalb der Stadtmauern lebende Bevölkerung Jerusalems innerhalb der Mauern Zuflucht gesucht hat⁽⁵¹⁾, dann kann man kaum annehmen, daß der Rechabiter-Clan seine wohl umfangreichen Zeltanlagen irgendwo innerhalb der Stadtmauern hätte aufbauen können. Jedenfalls haben sie ihre Zelte gewiß nicht rund um die Stadt herum (so McKane)⁽⁵²⁾, d. h. wohl außerhalb der Stadtmauern, aufgeschlagen, da sie in diesem Fall vor dem heranrückenden Heer Nebukadnezars nicht in Sicherheit gewesen wären.

Die Rechabiter wohnten in Jerusalem in Häusern. Offenbar fühlten sie sich wegen der herannahenden Kriegsgefahr — um ihr eigenes Leben nicht zu gefährden — nicht mehr an das Gebot Jonadabs, in Zelten zu wohnen, gebunden⁽⁵³⁾. Freilich dürfte nur ein vorübergehender Aufenthalt in Jerusalem geplant gewesen sein. Da sie nämlich in Jerusalem dem Gebot ihres Ahnherm, niemals Wein zu trinken, treu geblieben sind, darf vermutet werden, daß sie den Befehl Jonadabs, ihr ganzes Leben lang in Zelten zu wohnen, noch immer für verbindlich erachtet haben.

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⁽⁵⁰⁾ Vgl. RUDOLPH, *Jeremia*, 227, der auf Jer 4,5-6 und 8,14 hinweist.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Vgl. OTTO, *Jerusalem*, 69 (in bezug auf die Zeit Hiskijas [728-699 v. Chr.]).

⁽⁵²⁾ *Commentary*, 895.

⁽⁵³⁾ Vgl. M. KESSLER, *A Prophetic Biography: A Form-Critical Study of Jeremiah, Chapters 26-29, 32-45* (Diss.; Microfilm-Xerography; Department of Near Eastern & Judaic Studies Brandeis University: 1965) 218 Anm. 7: "..., this seems to suggest the need for applying a binding command creatively to a given situation".

SUMMARY

The Rechabites who were obliged to follow the nomadic way of life fled to Jerusalem according to Jer 35 in the face of the Babylonian-Aramean army that was moving towards Judah (597 B. C.). Although their ancestors Jonadab had among other things commanded his descendents always to dwell in tents, the Rechabites in Jerusalem lived in houses. This interpretation of the literature is of course disputed. According to many exegetes the Rechabites preserved the nomadic way of life. Nevertheless, a syntactic-semantic analysis of the verbal forms of vv. 8-11 and an analysis of the connections between the sentences in vv. 8-11 show that the rechabites during their stay in Jerusalem observed only the prohibitions of their ancestors — to drink no wine, to build no houses and to plant or to possess a vineyard —, but not his to live in tents.

RES BIBLIOGRAPHICAE

Epigraphy as an *ancilla* to the study of the Greek Bible. A propos of a recent anthology of inscriptions ⁽¹⁾

It is a curious feature of the history of research on the Greek Bible that it took so long for the significance of Greek inscriptions to be perceived and, furthermore, that this realisation began only a century ago, in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Greek and Latin literature had been quarried since J.J. Wettstein⁽²⁾ to illustrate — or contrast with — both the linguistic usage and the sentiments of the first Christian writers. In fact, but for the discovery of large numbers of papyri a century ago in Egypt, inscriptions may well still be standing silently in the shadowlands of Biblical studies, largely unnoticed, their potential untapped for the contextualization of intertestamental Judaism and of Christianity in the first century of its existence. As they began to be published, the papyri captured popular imagination no less than the interest of scholarly circles. For Biblical Studies their importance was immediately obvious, in several ways: to mention just three, copies of biblical texts had been found which predated in some cases the great Uncials of the fourth century; the discovery of many private letters offered interesting affinities in genre with the NT letters; and linguistic features of these non-literary texts provided similarities with elements in the NT writings. When Deissmann drew attention to the importance of the papyri, however, he also saw the equal significance of the epigraphic texts for Biblical studies⁽³⁾. His work exercised a considerable influence until a reaction against his approach became evident in the 1930s⁽⁴⁾. Had he completed the lexicon of the NT on which he had been working until he was diverted into other tasks by the outbreak of the First World War, perhaps his views would have retained a much longer currency. For it is apparent from his

⁽¹⁾ Laura BOFFO, *Iscrizioni greche e latine per lo studio della Bibbia* (Biblioteca di storia e storiografia dei tempi biblici 9). Brescia, Paideia Editrice, 1994. 459 p. 15,5 x 23. Abbreviations of Greek epigraphic corpora and related works used here follow those suggested in G.H.R. HORSLEY – J.A.L. LEE, "A preliminary checklist of abbreviations of Greek epigraphic volumes", *Epigraphica* 56 (1994) 129-169.

⁽²⁾ *Novum Testamentum Graecum editionis receptae cum lectionibus variantibus... nec non commentariis plenior ex scriptoribus veteribus Hebraeis, Graecis, et Latinis historiam et vim verborum illustrante*. Vols. 1-2 (Amsterdam 1751-1752; reprint: Graz 1962).

⁽³⁾ G.A. DEISSMANN *Bibelstudien* (Marburg 1895); id., *Neue Bibelstudien* (Marburg 1897); id., *Licht vom Osten* (Tübingen 1908).

⁽⁴⁾ Cf. J. ROS, *De studie van het Bijbelgrieks van Hugo Grotius tot Adolf Deissmann* (Nijmegen 1940) 33-44, especially 44; a contrasting perspective at *New Docs* 4.37-40, especially 39.

correspondence with J.H. Moulton that he was intending to draw heavily upon epigraphical evidence to illustrate NT usage⁽⁵⁾. Thanks largely to Deissmann, the inscriptions 'piggybacked' to prominence in NT circles on the surge of interest in the papyri. Yet among NT scholars the papyri certainly dominated the other branch of documentary texts, despite the considerably longer period for which the inscriptions had been subjected to research scrutiny. Apart from Deissmann himself and a couple of his students, the inscriptions largely went out of focus in the NT field⁽⁶⁾. In the preface to the first fascicule of their *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* — a preface even less read than most because it was not included in the complete, one-volume work — J.H. Moulton and G. Milligan (MM) were explicit about the difficulty of collecting epigraphic evidence⁽⁷⁾. Although they built upon Deissmann's work, and culled the non-literary papyri with gusto, they conceded that the use which they had made of the epigraphic evidence was much more limited: indeed, they confined themselves mainly to a few anthologies, such as Dittenberger's *OGIS (Orientis greci inscriptiones selectae)* and *SIG (Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum)*, together with *IG (Inscriptiones graece)* and a few important corpora from certain cities. Then they began on *SEG (Supplementum epigraphicum graecum)*; vol. 1 in two fascicules, 1923-24) which pulls together the annual harvest of inscriptions presented in journals. The papyrologists, internationally co-operative and better organised from the outset⁽⁸⁾, already had the first volume of *SB (Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten)*, ed. F. Preisigke) in three parts in train before the First War (1913-15). The first two Lieferungen of *WB (Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden)*, ed. F. Preisigke) appeared in 1924, for which there has never been a true equivalent in epigraphy. The preponderance in MM of papyrus evidence over epigraphic in proportion to the relative amounts of each which had been published is reflected in that book's subtitle, where the papyri but not the inscriptions are explicitly mentioned: *Illustrated from the papyri and other non-literary sources* — and by the latter they meant the inclusion of writers such as Vettius Valens and Epiktetos, not inscriptions alone.

Whereas a number of collections was made quite early of papyrus texts which might interest students of the Bible⁽⁹⁾, it was a very long wait until something similar was done with the inscriptions. To the best of my

(⁵) G.H.R. HORSLEY, "The origin and scope of Moulton and Milligan's *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, and Deissmann's planned New Testament lexicon. Some unpublished letters of G.A. Deissmann to J.H. Moulton", *BJRL* 76 (1994) 187-216.

(⁶) See *New Docs* 4.90-91.

(⁷) Fasc. 1 (London 1914). The complete work was published in one volume in 1930. The relevant portion of their preface (page 5) is quoted in *New Docs* 4.90, and again in *NT* 34 (1992) 114.

(⁸) On the early years of papyrology a century ago, see J. KRAMER, "Papyrologie und Sprachwissenschaft: Die Pionierzeit (1891-1906)", *Acta of the 20th International Congress of Papyrology held in Copenhagen in August 1992* (ed. A. BÜLOW-JACOBSEN) (Copenhagen 1994) 71-80.

(⁹) One example from each end of the present century must suffice: G. MILLIGAN, *Selections from the Greek Papyri* (Cambridge 1910), and J.L. WHITE, *Light from Ancient Letters* (Philadelphia 1986).

knowledge the trailblazer was Emilio Gabba from Milan. His contribution⁽¹⁰⁾ was important not only because it was the first of its kind (if we except Deissmann's *Licht vom Osten* as *sui generis*): it is also to be noted that Gabba was an epigrapher and ancient historian. He approached the texts from this background, rather than as a NT specialist. Gabba knew his business well, and presented succinctly his well-chosen selection of 35 texts, leaving it to users to tease out more fully points of interest for the intertestamental Jewish writings in the Apocrypha and the NT documents. The book was well received by epigraphers no less than by Biblical researchers.

Gabba's useful volume has been long out of print; the lack has now been met more than a generation later by an anthology of 45 inscriptions which relate to some or other aspect of the Bible. Laura Boffo's book is clearly intended to supersede that of her teacher: the very title is identical. Gabba's presence in the new book remains strong. Not only has he provided a preface which describes her book as a new work, but his 1958 introduction is reprinted verbatim, with only a few updating additions by Boffo to the notes. This is rather disconcerting, and occasions some confusing impressions for the reader which could easily have been avoided by some judicious editing of the older introduction. The author herself is more modest in calling her contribution a re-elaboration and a revision of her former teacher's volume. And she is right in this perspective; for, although greatly expanded in length (in part due to the addition of several inscriptions, but mainly because the scale of conception for each entry is quite different from Gabba's spare commentaries), Boffo's book is really a second edition of Gabba's compendium.

The layout of each entry is as follows: bibliography, text, commentary, translation (unless the text is too fragmentary). Some of the other details could usefully have been placed in a consistent position within this arrangement. Several entries require careful searching to discover the date of the text. Unless I missed it, the most awkward instance of this is no. 15 whose date (II BC; Gabba no. 10 proposes early I BC) awaits discovery on page 330 under no. 39. It is also hard to find the *editio princeps* for each inscription. Sometimes this information is listed separately from the bibliography, together with other editions; at other times it is buried away in the bibliography itself; and a few times it is mentioned in a footnote or in the commentary. Details of dimensions of the stone could also have been presented in a consistent place within each entry.

Eleven inscriptions published since Gabba's book appeared have been added to the new version, and one item (no. 35) from the 1958 book has been dropped. Even that one (two ossuary inscriptions from Jerusalem which include the name 'Jesus') need not have been excised if a different orientation from Gabba's were given to the commentary; but perhaps the confrontingly defiant title of an article by J.P. Kane⁽¹¹⁾ deterred Boffo (see her Foreword, 10). The point arises for consideration, what makes an

⁽¹⁰⁾ *Iscrizioni greche e latine per lo studio della Bibbia* (Sintesi dell' Oriente e della Bibbia 3; Milano 1958).

⁽¹¹⁾ J.P. KANE "By no means 'The earliest records of Christianity' – with an emended reading of the Talpioth inscription IESOUS IOU", *PEQ* 103 (1971) 103-108.

inscription appropriate for the study of the Bible? Different answers may be advanced, partly on the basis of the kind of reader who is envisaged by the author. Gabba treats this usefully in his introduction (Boffo, 18). While some inscriptions are of clear and direct relevance (e.g., no. 23, the Quirinius inscription from Syria which raises the problem of the date of the census mentioned in the Lukan birth narrative at 2, 1-3), others refer to people who are mentioned in the Bible (e.g., Antiochos IV Epiphanes, no. 11; Herod the Great, no. 17; Pontius Pilate, no. 25; Gallio the proconsul, no. 29), to civic magistracies (politarchs, no. 27), or to Jewish institutions (synagogues and *proseuchai*, nos. 1, 10, 12). Those sections of the Bible on which Greek and Latin inscriptions may bear are parts of the Apocrypha for the intertestamental period, and the New Testament for incipient Christianity and contemporary expressions of Judaism.

Boffo's choice of 45 Greek and Latin inscriptions may be analysed from several vantage points. In date they range from the third quarter of III BC to AD II or III, with just under half before the turn of the era. Geographically, Syria-Palestine is strongly represented, followed closely by Greece and the Mediterranean islands. Six inscriptions come from Egypt; but it is surprising, perhaps, that only four were selected from Italy and Asia Minor, respectively as for genres, more than a quarter are dedications, followed by a good number of inscriptions on buildings, pavements, etc., as well as honorific texts and epitaphs. A sprinkling of other types of inscriptions is represented in ones and twos: royal/imperial letters, milestone, graffito, proxeny list (no. 7, the only inscription from which an extract is included), prayer (or curse) text. There is a fairly even representation of Jewish and pagan inscriptions, with no Christian ones. Eleven texts are in Latin, the remainder in Greek; but there are two bilinguals (Greek/Latin, Greek/Hebrew).

Several of the items carried across from Gabba's book are 'old chestnuts', texts which patently are of interest for those concerned with the historical and linguistic context of the biblical narratives, yet which also raise their own serious problems of interpretation. Examples of these are the Quirinius inscription (Boffo no. 23; the longest entry in the volume), the fragmentary inscription from Kypros mentioning a Q. Serg[ius] – (no. 28), which has been taken rather too readily (if understandably) to refer to Sergius Paullus the governor of the island whom Barnabas and Saul encountered (Acts 13, 4-12), the Gallio inscription from Delphi (no. 29), the 'keep out' notice from the Temple at Jerusalem (no. 32), the Erastus inscription from Korinth (no. 43), and the theatre inscription from Miletos mentioning Jews and Godfearers (no. 44). The Gallio inscription offers a good instance of the value of Boffo's book. Gabba no. 22 treated it succinctly and well for what was known in the 1950s; but Boffo no. 29 is able to provide a rather improved (though still heavily restored) text thanks to the discovery and publication in 1967 by A. Plassart of several more fragments⁽¹²⁾. Some of the entries are rather less satisfying, however: the end of a decree about religious matters which

⁽¹²⁾ A. PLASSART *FD* 3.4.3.286; cf. id., "L'inscription de Delphes mentionnant le proconsul Gallion", *REG* 80 (1967) 372-378.

mentions Q. Sergius (no. 28), for example, has a number of readings which may be open to some doubt when compared with the photo in Gabba (pl. 4). A critical one for the date of the text occurs in *l.* 9, where Boffo prints Γ[ο]ίου following T.B. Mitford against Gabba's Κλαυδ[ι]ου following *ed. pr.* and L. Robert.

The eleven new texts (seven Greek, four Latin) were first published between the years 1958 (no. 36) and 1987 (no. 5). It may be useful here to list them, with brief evaluation where appropriate.

Nos. 2 (*c.* 250-175 BC) and 3 (150-50 BC), both Greek, first published in 1982, are treated together and concern the Samaritan community on Delos: an excellent choice to include these. No. 3 is the only inscription of the entire anthology to be illustrated with a photo (on the book's cover).

No. 4 (before 215/4 BC) is a dedication by a priest honouring Ptolemy IV Philopator, published in 1962. It was reused and found at Joppa in a third-century catacomb. Boffo denies that a temple is implied by the stele; but could you have a priest without some kind of cult centre? The commentary is interesting, but might have explored briefly the question of Hellenistic divine kingship as a precursor to the Imperial cult. How is the text really relevant to the study of the Bible? The text is not Jewish, and we are left to infer that it was included primarily because of the Joppa provenance, and the associations that location had for Judaism and primitive Christianity.

No. 5 is a dossier of three Greek letters including a Royal Letter from Antiochos III to Zeuxis, inscribed in Mysia in 209 BC and published in 1987. While they are of high interest in themselves, the link with the study of the Bible — which is, after all, the rationale for inclusion in the present volume — is very slight: the dossier provides the opportunity to consider anew the authenticity of the letter preserved in Josephos (*Ant.* 12, 148-53) from Antiochos to Zeuxis concerning the forced transfer of 2000 Jewish families to Phrygia and Lydia from Mesopotamia and Babylonia.

No. 14 (published in 1961) is a dedication dated 135-129 BC and found at Akko which was offered by a local official to Zeus Soter on behalf of Antiochos VII and Kleopatra Thea. The date means that Antiochos' epithet *kallinikos* may allude to his victory over John Hyrkanos. The wording of this dedication is exactly paralleled by no. 10, in which Jews in Egypt make a dedication to Theos Hypsistos on behalf of Ptolemy VI Philometor and his wife Kleopatra. The useful discussion of the parallel in the Antiochos text to the use of *euergetes* in Lk. 22, 25 might have been a model for many more such comments on the language of these inscriptions relative to the study of the Bible. On the whole, Boffo has chosen to make the strength of her book lie elsewhere, in her generally clear, up-to-date and evenhanded presentation of the historical problems raised by the inscriptions.

No. 25, the well-known Pontius Pilate building inscription in Latin from Caesarea, was first published in 1961 and is probably to be dated AD 31: a *sine qua non* for inclusion, undoubtedly. The commentary, dealing satisfactorily with the several obvious points, seems to me, nevertheless, to be lacking somewhat in its consideration of the layout of the text, and the consequences of this for its interpretation. There was a maximum of

four lines, subsequently erased on the left and in the last line. *Praeflectus* in *l.* 3 implies that not too much has been lost after Pilate's name in the previous line; but more than the very few letters proposed by Boffo's edition are likely to be missing. Even though the letters are up to 7 cm. high, the text is too short to serve as a building inscription. Is it possible to establish that the text was confined to one block?

No. 26, also in Latin, was first published in 1979, and is a funerary monument from Rome for an imperial slave of Tiberius named Idumaeus, who (given his name) may have come to the city from Idumaea as a gift from Herod the Great or his sister Salome to Livia, the emperor's mother.

No. 30, much debated since it was first published in 1966, is a fragmentary Greek inscription dated not long after AD 70 and found near Haifa. It commemorates T. Mucius Clemens, who served as Agrippa II's army commander in the war against the Jews in AD 70. The *cursus* for this Roman citizen who may have been a Jew is curious. If Clemens were Jewish, and acting in a high profile capacity *de facto* on behalf of the Romans, then the analogy with Josephos deserves to be explored further. In an appendix (265-273) to that text Boffo prints and discusses the now lost *IGLS* 7.4011, likewise an incomplete text of post-70 date from Syria, which shows parallels to Clemens' career; the partly preserved name has been claimed to be that of Pliny the Elder.

No. 33 attests the provision of a mosaic for Herod's temple in Jerusalem, the gift of a man from Rhodes. The fragmentary Greek text is possibly to be dated 18/7 BC (in any case, it must be prior to AD 70) on the basis of a highpriestly year (name lost). This slight piece, which is nevertheless of some interest, was first published in 1983.

No. 36 first appeared in the year Gabba's book was published and is a Latin inscription dated to the early 80s AD from Urbs Salvia near Picenum in Italy, giving the *cursus* of L. Flavius Silva Nonius Bassus in the context of his donation (in concert with his family) of an amphitheatre and provision of *spectacula* at the opening. He was consul in AD 81, and governor of Judaea prior to that. Much debate has been occasioned by this text concerning the date of the siege at Masada, the length of the Jewish resistance, and whether there was indeed a mass suicide — spilling over to contemporary ideological questions (Boffo, 310). This is a particularly good choice to include, and Boffo's commentary is very useful.

No. 38 (published in 1974) is a Latin dedication by Legio X Fretensis to mark its erection of a building at Jerusalem to honour Vespasian and Titus in AD 78/9. The erased name of the commanding officer (who at this period also acted as governor of Judaea) was probably L. Antonius Saturninus (inscribed in some abbreviated manner — R. Syme's proposal to include a shortened form of the *cognomen* may be preferable to the restoration included by Boffo), whose brief revolt in 89 while legate in Germania Superior accounts for the *damnatio* here.

The selection of texts for an anthology will be made slightly differently by each person. It should not be inferred that the 35 texts chosen by Gabba were the only ones which merited inclusion at that time. No older published inscriptions have been re-evaluated for possible inclusion in Boffo's book, apparently. This may be felt to be a lost opportunity. By adopting all but

one of Gabba's original choices, has the new editor felt herself somewhat confined? Not only are all the inscriptions except his last retained in the same date order, with the new items added in at the appropriate point chronologically, but in most cases Gabba's views, and even quite a bit of almost verbatim wording are taken over. Yet there is some independence visible. A few inscriptions are edited rather differently in the light of scholarly debate over the intervening three decades. No. 16, for example, a fragmentary honorific inscription for a *strategos* in Egypt who may have been Jewish, is handled more cautiously by Boffo. She declines to offer a translation since there is no continuous text in which we can be confident. In contrast, Gabba no. 11 provided a translation of this inscription on the basis of the full supplements proposed by T. Reinach in his *editio princeps* at the turn of the century. It is the restorations which make this *strategos* decisively Jewish: whether it can be shown to be Jewish otherwise is open to some question. And once this doubt arises for the reader, the question inevitably arises: what justifies its inclusion in a volume of inscriptions relative to the study of the Bible? May there not be some less problematic texts *qua* texts to consider for inclusion?

A further instance where Boffo demonstrates her independence of her predecessor is no. 11 (= Gabba, no. 7), now lost. For this fragmentary dedication to Antiochos IV Epiphanes Boffo provides a considerable number of different restorations and a different line length, along with a detailed *apparatus*. In ll. 3 and 8 the way the year is read, having a *kai* interposed between the second and third numeral, seems odd. In the first of these lines the first numeral should be printed as 'to indicate *stigma* (= 6), not *sigma* (= 200). The reason the inscription has been included is because of the mention of the notorious profaner of the Temple. Yet this particular inscription throws no light on that event at all, so is selected merely because of the attestation of the monarch's name. This basis for selection seems rather slight if nothing more can be made of the particular text *vis-à-vis* the study of the Bible; and this inscription is not the sole one in the anthology of which this observation is true.

The doubt alluded to above about the basis for selection may nag at the reader for other inscriptions where there is no problem of a fragmentary text. The sole verse inscription to be included by Boffo, no. 19, is a funerary epigram for a woman from Leontopolis in Egypt. It is interesting in its own right for a number of reasons; but why has it been included? The answer lies in the fact that Gabba apparently chose to put it into his volume (no. 14) primarily on the basis of J.-B. Frey's article on the word *πρωτότοκος* in this inscription⁽¹³⁾, and Boffo follows him. There are several other words in this inscription alone which also might have merited comment in relation to their use in the Greek Bible.

In contrast, no. 31 is a quite exemplary treatment of a series of terms in a Jerusalem inscription in which a man records his contribution towards the building program of a synagogue, and indicates his family's long association with it in leadership roles and philanthropic support. This text

⁽¹³⁾ "La signification du terme *πρωτότοκος* d'après une inscription juive", *Bib* 11 (1930) 373-390.

is well known (= *CIJ* 2.1404), but Boffo has covered all the features of the text — titles, family, consequences for the Hellenization of Palestine — in an excellent manner.

The observation was made earlier that there are other inscriptions long known which might have merited inclusion in a new anthology possessing the focus that this one has. Examples may be noted briefly, and somewhat randomly, of texts which illustrate rather different points of connection with the Bible. Since politarchs are included, one might also reasonably expect attention to be given to certain other officials such as the asiarchs, most of the evidence for whom is epigraphic. There has been debate about them over the last fifteen years which could usefully have been evaluated in a book of this kind⁽¹⁴⁾. The important Jewish inscription from Aphrodisias listing Godfearers as a recognised category in the Jewish community seems an obvious item to include⁽¹⁵⁾; indeed, the problematic Miletos theatre inscription (no. 44) might have been subsumed into an entry whose focus and starting point was the Aphrodisias text. One or more of the Isis aretalogies would provide useful material, whether for an exploration of the 'I am' statements in the Fourth Gospel (*I.Kyme* 41), or for consideration of intense personal devotion to a deity⁽¹⁶⁾. The inclusion of an oracle recorded on stone, such as *SEG* 27.933 from Oinoanda, would be easy to justify. So, too, would be a selection of the moral maxims set up at Aī Khanoum in Afghanistan⁽¹⁷⁾; other epigraphic copies are known from elsewhere. An inscription such as *SIG*³ 985, emphasising as it does the strict moral requirements for membership of a voluntary association in Lydia in II or early I BC, has much to offer for an anthology of this kind. The same is true of confession texts⁽¹⁸⁾, and sacred laws⁽¹⁹⁾. *IG* XII 9.1179

⁽¹⁴⁾ R.A. KEARSLEY, "Asiarchs, *Archiereis*, and the *Archiereiai* of Asia", *GRBS* 27 (1986) 183-192; id., "M. Ulpius Appuleius Eurykles of Aezani: Panhellene, Asiarch and *Archiereus* of Asia", *Antichthon* 21 (1987) 49-56; id., "Asiarchs: titulature and function. A reappraisal", *StudClas* 26 (1988) 57-65; id., "A leading family of Cibyra and some Asiarchs of the first century", *AS* 38 (1988) 43-51; id., "Some asiarchs of Ephesos", *New Docs* 4.46-55; id., "Asiarchs, *Archiereis* and *Archiereiai* of Asia: new evidence from Amorium in Phrygia", *EA* 16 (1990) 69-80; M. WÖRRLE, "Neue Inschriftenfunde aus Aizanoi, I", *Chiron* 22 (1992) 337-376, at Appendix pp. 368-370; P. HERZ, "Asiarchen und *Archiereiai*. Zum Provinzialkult der Provinz Asia", *Tyche* 7 (1992) 93-115; S. FRIESEN, *Twice Neokoros. Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* (Leiden 1993), index p. 233, and appendixes 1 and 2 (169-217). R.A. KEARSLEY "The Asiarchs of Cibyra again", *Tyche* 11 (1996) 129-155, offers a response to Herz (see especially 153, n. 182).

⁽¹⁵⁾ J. REYNOLDS — R. TANNENBAUM, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias* (Cambridge 1987).

⁽¹⁶⁾ Y. GRANDJEAN, *Une nouvelle arétalogie d'Isis à Maronée* (Leiden 1975).

⁽¹⁷⁾ L. ROBERT, "De Delphes à l'Oxus. Inscriptions grecques nouvelles de la Bactriane", *CRAI* (1968) 416-457 (= *OMS* 5.510-51).

⁽¹⁸⁾ G. PETZL, *Die Beichtinschriften Westkleinasiens* (Epigraphica Anatolica 22; Bonn 1994); supplementary texts in id., "Neue Inschriften aus Lydien (II)", *EA* 28 (1997) 69-79. Note, too, H.-J. KLAUCK, "Die kleinasiatischen Beichtinschriften und das Neue Testament", *Geschichte, Tradition, Reflexion*. (Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag; [eds. H. Cancik et al.] Tübingen 1996) 63-87.

⁽¹⁹⁾ F. SOKOLOWSKI, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie mineure (LSAM)* (Paris 1955). id., *Lois sacrées des cités grecques: supplément (LSCGSuppl.)* (Paris 1962). id., *Lois sacrées des cités grecques (LSCG)* (Paris 1969).

has been suggested to show us a member of the Second Sophistic who is sympathetic towards and knowledgeable about Judaism⁽²⁰⁾. The problematic (because fragmentary) dedication to the 'unknown gods' found at Pergamon might be a candidate for inclusion⁽²¹⁾; and the Hellenistic bilingual dedication to 'God in Dan' which has come to light fairly recently is worth more than a passing thought⁽²²⁾. Although they may come from a later period, the quotation of biblical passages in inscriptions and the inscribing of biblical tags, whether texts carved on lintels of churches and homes or on gravestones, may be felt to be relevant to such an anthology⁽²³⁾. The list could be extended, but the point is clear: in an anthology with the focus that Boffo's possesses there is scope for a much wider variety of inscriptions to be represented.

It is easy, of course, for a reviewer to make suggestions about desirable additions, but books must have a finite length. There are several inscriptions in the present collection some of which have been noted above as less obvious choices. Were some of these to have been excluded, a more diverse anthology could have resulted. And there is a high premium on diversity in books of this kind, for it is realistic to suppose that many of those readers for whom the book is primarily intended will study no other inscriptions than these. Apart from those texts noted above with a somewhat unclear rationale for inclusion, no. 1 seems otiose given the inclusion of no. 10. As for no. 27, the politarchs are well worth retaining, but there are rather more fruitful texts featuring them which might have been selected⁽²⁴⁾. J.M.S. Cowey has informed me (and generously authorised me to mention here) that he is currently preparing for publication two papyri in the Heidelberg collection which identify the same man as 'politarch'. Both are petitions of fifth-century date addressed to Alexander the politarch 'who is at the top of the administrative organisation of the Jewish *politeuma* at Herakleopolis'.

Diversity of selection as a desideratum makes it pertinent to mention here epigraphy's role as an *ancilla* to the study of the Greek Bible. While

⁽²⁰⁾ L. ROBERT, "Malédiction funéraires grecques", *CRAI* (1978) 242-289, at 245-252 (= *OMS* 5.701-08).

⁽²¹⁾ H. HEPDING, "Die Arbeiten zu Pergamon, 1908-09, II. Die Inschriften", *MDAI(A)* 35 (1910) 454-457; cf. P.W. VAN DER HORST, "The altar of the 'Unknown God' in Athens (Acts 17, 23) and the cult of 'Unknown Gods' in the Hellenistic and Roman periods", *ANRW* II.18.2 (1989) 1426-1456, at 1432-1435.

⁽²²⁾ A. BIRAN, "Notes and News. Tel Dan, 1976", *IEJ* 26 (1976) 202-206, spec. 204-205.

⁽²³⁾ L. MALUNOWICZ, "Citations bibliques dans l'épigraphie grecque", *Studia Evangelica VII*. Papers presented to the Fifth International Congress on Biblical Studies held at Oxford, 1973, (ed. E.A. LIVINGSTONE) (*TU* 126; Leipzig 1982) 333-337; D. Feissel, "La Bible dans les inscriptions grecques", *Le monde grec ancien et la Bible* (éd. C. MONDÉSERT) (Paris 1984) 223-231.

⁽²⁴⁾ A tabulation of all the politarch testimonia (not just Macedonia) is included by G.H.R. HORSLEY, "The politarchs in Macedonia, and beyond", *Ancient Macedonia: an Australian Symposium ...1991* (ed. P. CONNOR) = *MeditArch* 7 (1994 [1995]) (Sydney 1995) 99-126, in which a Roman date for the institution of the office is adhered to. For a reiteration of the argument that it preceded 167 BC see M.B. HATZOPOULOS, *BE* (1997) 540-541 no. 358; and note Hatzopoulos' important book, in which the same views are advanced: *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings*. 2 vols. (*Meletemata* 22; Athens 1996) index, s.v. "politarch".

epigraphy is a significant sub-discipline within the field of Classics, there is much for those in Biblical Studies to learn from the texts published by those specialists. But where they are presented in a forbidding manner that has the appearance of epigraphers talking only *inter se*, these important evidences from antiquity will rarely reach those wider readerships which may derive considerable benefit from them. Boffo's book has the considerable merit of not being daunting for an epigraphic neophyte to use. If her volume draws such readers on to examination of further inscriptions relating to their own field of Biblical studies, it will have succeeded well in its goal. In one way, however, the provision of at least some plates of the texts, the volume's usefulness could have been expanded.

It is a considerable service that the bibliographies to each text are so full and up-to-date; but users of the volume will soon realise that numerous items in each bibliography deal with the general issues raised by the text in question and not necessarily with the particular text at all. Likewise, the indexes are extremely full; if they are not exhaustive that is forgivable. The whole work has been proffered with great care, and the few typographical errors I noted are mostly not likely to cause confusion. In no. 23 line 8 of the Quirinius inscription, it may not easily be picked up that the final word *idem* should be italicised, since in this Latin text it is the non-italicised lettering which has been lost (see pl. 3 in Gabba).

So this well-presented volume should be a useful and generally reliable *vade mecum* for those working in Biblical Studies who are not familiar with inscriptions. Specialist epigraphers are also likely to find here useful bibliography and up-to-date surveys of how some of these texts have been understood by Biblical scholars. If this volume helps to keep each discipline aware of the other, that will be a considerable benefit. Were there to be a murmur of regret about its selection of items being too cautious in following so conscientiously its predecessor book, at least it may be appreciated that this is a mark of *pietas* by Boffo towards 'il maestro'.

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RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Ulrich DAHMEN, *Leviten und Priester im Deuteronomium. Literarkritik und redaktionsgeschichtliche Studien* (BBB 110).
Bodenheim, Philo Verlag, 1996. xiv-458 p. 17 x 24,5

Two classic problems of Old Testament scholarship are brought together in this study, originally the author's 1996 Bonn University dissertation. The first is the long standing dispute over the place of priests and Levites in Deuteronomy. The second is the more comprehensive question of the literary and redactional development of Deuteronomy. The author seeks to answer the problems raised by the first issue by means of a thoroughgoing investigation of the second. The ultimate goal is to contribute to an understanding of how the institutional roles of priests and Levites changed over time.

Scholarly study of Deuteronomy's stance concerning priests and Levites has tended to focus on two central issues. The first involves the implications of the enigmatic formula "the priests, the Levites" found in Deuteronomy and deuteronomistic literature. Is this an "Identitätsformel" meant to equate all Levites with priests (following A.H.J. Gunneweg, *Leviten und Priester* [FRLANT 89; Gottingen 1965] 131-132)? The second point of contention centers on the intention and historical background of Deut 18,1-8. The present form of this passage has been seen by many as demanding an unlimited acceptance of provincial Levites into the priesthood of the centralized sanctuary. This law is commonly correlated with Josiah's supposed failure to permit this from happening in his centralization reform (2 Kgs 23,8-9). In regard to the history of the composition of Deuteronomy, scholarly interest has focused primarily on the interrelationship of the various frameworks that enclose the basic law book and on the separation of supposed literary layers within the central core of chapters 12-26.

Dahmen finds the key to understanding the complexities involving priests and Levites in the rigorous pursuit of his historical critical program. His results are based on a careful and detailed investigation of all references to priests and Levites in Deuteronomy. The resulting historical critical separation of the developmental stages of the book is coordinated with the history of the priests and Levites from the late monarchy down through the late Second Temple period. The results of his investigation also have

an impact on our understanding of the development of the Pentateuch as a progressively closing canon and the ideological developments visible in the Priestly Writing and Chronicles.

Setting aside minor details, Dahmen traces: (1) a Deuteronomistic base text from the time of Josiah, (2) a late deuteronomistic redaction (exilic), (3) a pro-levitical adaptation (post-exilic), and (4) a priestly corrector or "censor". These results are summarized on pages 394-401 and arranged systematically on pages 401-405.

In the base text of Deuteronomy, the Levites are treated as a social group in special need of benevolence. They appear as members of the extended social family who participate at cult events. No information is provided about their function in either religion or society in general. Their status as a needy group is simply taken for granted, and no explanation is provided for why they are to be a focus of special concern. Since they appear in the context of a document promoting cult centralization, these Levites presumably had some undefined role in ritual, but nothing specific is said about this. None of the later redactional levels reflects this impoverished position of the Levites, which suggests that the issue was made obsolete by the circumstances of the exile. The priests, in contrast, have clearly defined juridical and sacrificial roles at the central sanctuary. In the base text of Deuteronomy, there is no trace of a head priest or of priestly leadership in governmental affairs. It is also important to note that the original form of Deuteronomy offers no information about the genealogical origin of the priesthood.

In a subsequent "late deuteronomistic redaction" (present within 17,9-11.18-19; 18,1; 21,5-6; 24,8-9; 26,3-4; 27,9; 31,9.12-13), the priesthood is provided with a levitical genealogical origin. This layer is characterized by the phrases "the priests, the Levites" and "the priests the sons of Levi". The first formula does not seek to identify the priests and Levites as a single group, but to emphasize that the priests in question are unquestionably levitical in ancestral background. It is apparent from 17,9 (and perhaps 18,1) that this formula originated as an expansion of references to "the priests" in the base text of Deuteronomy by the late deuteronomistic redactor. This redaction level is present in both the core chapters 12-26 and those later framing chapters that connect forward to Joshua. Its interest in providing the priests with a levitical genealogy reflects the conditions of the exilic period when other institutions had been destroyed, leaving only family structures. Ideological security could be found only in family genealogy. The exiled Zadokite Jerusalem priesthood needed a genealogical foundation for their claim to be the sole true priesthood, and the late deuteronomistic redaction anchors this claim in Mosaic law. This ideological move coordinates with the emerging emphasis in the P tradition on the levitical Aaron as the forebear of the priestly line and with the claims made in Ezekiel 40-48.

An ensuing "late pro-levitical adaptation" of the text took place after the exile (chiefly 10,8-9; 18,6-8; 27,14-15; 31,24-29; 33,9-10). This redaction is concerned with the written nature of the torah and coordinates the Horeb and Sinai theophany traditions. The inclusion of the earlier Blessing of Moses (Deuteronomy 33) is to be associated with this redaction.

This adaptation of Deuteronomy is interested in the priests and Levites together as part of the tribal entity of Levi. The focus is on the Levites in their role as minor clergy. This redaction takes up all aspects of priestly function from the earlier levels of Deuteronomy and claims them for the tribe of Levi as a whole - (including the Levites as associates to the priests). Thus, the election claims of the priests are claimed for the entire tribe of Levi by 10,8 and additions to 18,5. The Levites assert extensive rights as carriers of the ark, guardians of the torah, those who bless in Yahweh's name, and liturgical servants before Yahweh. In analogy to the priests' situation, they make a claim to economic support based on their landlessness. In short, this redactional layer seeks to provide a commentary on all that Deuteronomy has to say about priests and Levites in terms of the ideology set forth in 10,8-9.

These extravagant pro-levitical claims were subsequently relativized by a "priestly censoring" that involved the corrective additions of 10,6-7 (to 10,8-9) and 27,11-13 (to 27,14-15). This editorial activity reflects the conflicts visible in Numbers 16-17. The tension between priests and Levites points in the direction of the eventual compromise made in Chronicles and beyond this to continuing efforts at the emancipation of the Levites reflected in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.

The application of this historical-critical schema to Deuteronomy 18,1-8 is instructive. Setting aside details, these verses are seen as falling into two layers. Both layers center on claims to receive provisions from the sacrificial system. The base text of Deuteronomy (the original form of vv. 1.3-5) asserts this right for priests (who are not defined genealogically). The "late deuteronomistic redaction" is probably responsible for the formula "the priests, the Levites" in v. 1, resulting from the expansion by this redaction level of an originally unmodified mention of "priests." In any case, this disputed phrase is intended to emphasize the levitical character of the priests involved. It is not an attempt to equate the clerical classes of priest and Levite. The much later "pro-levitical" redaction has added vv. 6-7. These verses apply the claim for a share in the sacrifices to any Levites who might seek a situation at the central sanctuary. This post-exilic pro-levitical addition coordinates with the insertion of 10,8-9, which has a similar ideological slant. This historical critical insight makes clear the total lack of relationship between this passage and Josiah's reform. Deut 18,6-7 describes a spontaneous and sporadic voluntary movement of Levites to serve with their brother Levites at the central sanctuary. This has absolutely nothing to do with Josiah's forced settlement of non-Jerusalem priests (and not Levites!) described in 2 Kgs 23,8-9.

As an exercise in historical criticism, this study is painstaking and meticulous, and its primary conclusions demand serious consideration. Certainly, the insight that priests would be more likely to allege a "proper" genealogical background in the exile rather than in some earlier period is an important one. That the Levites as a institutionalized group receive no mention in pre-Deuteronomic texts and that Deuteronomy in its original form shows no interest in priestly genealogy are both points worthy of serious attention. That one should not apply Deut 18,1-8 (especially in its present form) directly to Josiah's reformation is a conclusion that many

readers should be willing to accept. Overall, however, one's evaluation of this project is likely to depend on one's acceptance of the methodology involved. In this era of increasing skepticism about the value of complex historical critical studies, the ability of an extended argument to convince the general scholarly population seems to be in inverse relationship to the amount of detail it seeks to encompass.

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Odil Hannes STECK, *Die Prophetenbücher und ihr theologisches Zeugnis. Wege der Nachfrage und Fährten zur Antwort.* Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1997. xiv-224 p. 17 x 24. Broschur; DM 58 – ÖS 425 – SFr 53,—; Leinen: DM 118 – ÖS 865 – SFr 101,—.

Der Verfasser, der seit Jahren in zahlreichen Veröffentlichungen, vor allem zum Jesajabuch, als Vorkämpfer eines Paradigmenwechsels in der Prophetenforschung hervorgetreten ist, bietet in dem vorliegenden programmatischen Buch gleichsam eine Hermeneutik der Prophetenbücher. Der Leser lasse sich durch die Redundanz in Sprache und Darstellung nicht ermüden und scheue nicht die Anstrengungen die auch für einen gebildeten *native speaker* schwierige Ausdrucksweise zu verstehen.

Der bisher nicht veröffentlichte erste Teil (1-124) plädiert im Sinne des Paradigmenwechsels dafür, daß wir nicht spornstreichs zum Propheten, dessen Namen das Buch trägt, vorzustößen versuchen, sondern zunächst und vor allem eine Synchronlesung des Buches anstreben. Eine solche buchorientierte Exegese hat zwar in den letzten Jahren an Boden gewonnen, doch bleibt noch Überzeugungsarbeit zu leisten. Es ist zudem nicht ohne weiteres klar, welche Aspekte zu berücksichtigen sind. So zum Beispiel die Textgrundlage, eventuell ein das Einzelbuch übergreifender Rahmen, die Unterscheidung von bloßer Kompilation und eigentlicher Redaktion. Vor allem ist zu beachten, daß die Synchronlesung historisch gemeint ist und daher nicht einer historisch neutralen Lesung gleichgesetzt werden darf, wie etwa New Literary Criticism, Rhetorical Criticism oder Reader Response Criticism sie vertreten (cf. 11, n. 7; 16, n. 18). In alldem ist dieser Teil des Buches, der fragend Wege abzustecken versucht, sehr instruktiv. Ob der Verfasser allerdings sein Bekenntnis zur (historischen) Synchronie, die Übrigen von den Gesetzen der Literaturwissenschaft gefordert wird, überzeugend aufrechterhalten kann, ist zweifelhaft; denn sein im zweiten Teil erläutertes Verständnis des Prophetentraditionsphänomens, das in all seinen Phasen prophetisch sein soll, nötigt ihn zu diachroner Lesung um ihrer selbst willen und nicht nur, insofern sie für die synchrone Lesung erhellend ist.

Wie bei der Erörterung der Synchronlesung möchte der Verfasser in diesem ersten Teil, auf den sich "Wege der Nachfrage" im Untertitel des Buches bezieht, auch mit Bezug auf die Diachronie keine vorschnellen konkreten Ergebnisse anbieten. Gleichwohl kommen seine eigenen literarkritischen Positionen unverhohlen zum Tragen. Daß es einen wechselvollen Traditionsstrom vom historischen Propheten bis zur Endfassung des Buches gegeben hat, scheint ihm überhaupt selbstverständlich zu sein.

Dieser Traditionsstrom ist denn auch Voraussetzung für die Ausführungen des zweiten Teils (125-204), wo in ergänzter Form eine frühere Veröffentlichung wiedergegeben wird (cf. H.F. Geißer u.a. [ed.], *Wahrheit der Schrift – Wahrheit der Auslegung. Eine Zürcher Vorlesungsreihe zu Gerhard Ebelings 80. Geburtstag am 6. Juli 1992* [Zürich 1993] 198-244). Hier erhält der Leser die im Untertitel angekündigten "Fährten der Antwort". Sie betreffen eben jenen Traditionsstrom und stellen seine Bedeutung für das Verständnis der Prophetenbücher heraus. Auf dem langen Traditionsweg soll es immer wieder zu Relecture, Neuinterpretation, Fortschreibung, produktiver Weitergabe, Rezeption, Auslegung, Neulesung, einem SichAuftun göttlicher Sinttiefe ("Metahistorie") gekommen sein. In progressiver Sinnentfaltung sei Neues gesagt worden, damit das Alte weitergetragen werde. Die Prophetenbuchtradition als solche hat selbst prophetischen Charakter (cf. "prophetische Prophetenauslegung" als Titel des zweiten Teils).

Diese Einschätzung des Prophetentraditionsphänomens stützt sich trotz der oft beteuerten Zurückhaltung auf ausgeprägte literarkritische und redaktionsgeschichtliche Positionen. Der Verfasser beruft sich weitgehend auf eigene Untersuchungen vornehmlich zum Jesajabuch, sowie auf Arbeiten aus seiner Schule ("Zürcher Schule") (cf. 145), kann aber ohnehin in der Grundtendenz einer breiten Zustimmung sicher sein. Mit Bezug auf das Jesajabuch wird hingewiesen auf eine Assur-Redaktion der Joschijazeit (mit H. Barth, *Die Jesajaworte in der Josiazeit. Israel und Assur als Thema einer produktiven Neuinterpretation der Jesajaüberlieferung* [WMANT 48; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1977]), eine Kyrus-Relecture in den deuterocesajanischen Kapiteln, eine sich in Jes 63,7–64,11 äußernde Klage über die Eroberung Jerusalems durch Ptolemäus I., nicht weniger als sechs sukzessive Interpretationen des Jahweknechts, die da reichen von Deuterocesaja selbst über den Perserkönig, über die Heilstätte Zion, über Zion und Gottesvolk, schließlich über Jesaja als Prophetengestalt des gesamten Buches bis hin zu einem Kreis der Frommen. Die Relecture-Vorgänge überschlagen sich im ausgehenden 4. und im 3. Jahrhundert (cf. 153-156 und 159-160). Von der Zurückhaltung, die im ersten Teil in Aussicht gestellt wurde (cf. 12-14; 86, n. 103; 89), ist da wenig zu spüren obwohl der Verfasser auch jetzt noch meint (cf. 168), für eine historische Konkretion des langzeitigen Prophetentraditionsphänomens sei es noch zu früh und die Annahme einer jahrhundertlang blühenden Jesaja-Schule sei ein reines Konstrukt (positiver wieder 176 unten). Vor der Unsicherheit solcher Prämissen des Traditionsphänomens kann man nur warnen. Es gibt heute wieder zunehmend die Überzeugung, daß Jes 40-55, wenn nicht gar Jes 40-66 eine

originäre literarische Einheit bildet. Es ist auch alles andere als erwiesen, daß das Jesajabuch im Sinne des "buchspezifischen Redaktionsmodells" (cf. 93-116) jemals einen anderen Schluß als Jes 65-66 gehabt hat. Die im ersten Teil zu Recht geforderte *Kohärenzlesung* der Endfassung des Buches wird weitgehend auf *Kohärenzkomposition* beruhen dürfen. Das variabel Themenspektrum der Prophetenbücher berechtigt weit weniger, als viele meinen, zur Suche nach unterschiedlichen Autoren und Epochen. Wie später das die Apokalyptik repräsentierende Danielbuch haben die Bücher von Anfang an kompositen Charakter und behandeln in immer neuen Varianten dasselbe Grundthema.

Gegen interpretierende Zwischenstationen in einem vermeintlichen Überlieferungsstrom spricht folgende Überlegung. Solange Israel in vorexilischer Zeits sei es in zwei Reichen, sei es zum Teil als assyrische Provinz, eine normale nationale Existenz beschieden war, sind heilshistorische Interpretationen, wie sie uns in den Prophetenbüchern entgegentreten, nicht zu erwarten. Die jorschijanische Reform, die ihre Bedeutsamkeit dem später schreibenden Deuteronomisten verdankt, dürfte keine interpretierende Bearbeitung älterer Prophetenbücher (Amos, Hosea, Jesaja, Micha) ausgelöst haben. Erst das (babylonische) Exil, das in der Folgezeit bezeichnenderweise bis zur historisch grotesken Entleerung des Landes hochstilisiert wird, leitet jenen Wechsel von der Nation zum "Judentum" ein, den man nicht hoch genug veranschlagen kann. Jetzt wird jene Sammlung von Büchern erstellt, die beherrscht ist von der Heilsverkündigung nach der Stunde Null, übrigens nicht nur in den Prophetenbüchern sondern auch in vielen Psalmen und mit historiographischer Verhaltenheit sogar in den Geschichtswerken. Zur Verkündigung des neuen Heils gehört auch die Darlegung der Ursachen des Unheils. Das Exil, Chiffre des Unheils, endet weder mit der dürftigen Heimkehr nach 539 v.Chr. noch mit dem Wiederaufbau des Tempels; es dauert in der Diasporasituation an. Die Heilsverkündigung ist so beherrschend, daß den zeitgeschichtlichen Hintergründen der nachexilischen Zeit, die variabel sind, und den verschiedenen Varianten der Heilsschilderung sowie dem Schicksal der Völker, das naturgemäß ambivalent ist, keine sonderliche Bedeutung beizumessen ist. Beim Erstellen der Prophetenbücher wurde, soweit man nicht überhaupt pseudepigraphisch verfuhr, auf eine spärliche schriftliche Hinterlassenschaft von Propheten zurückgegriffen, die bis dahin kein Dasein im Sinne des Prophetentraditionsphänomens gekannt hatte. Aufgegriffen wurde insbesondere die Unheilsverkündigung, die sich als wahr erwiesen hatte; sie funktioniert jetzt als dunkler Hintergrund, vor dem sich die der Prophetengestalt attribuierte Heilsverkündigung der Buchgestalter abhebt. Nach allem reduziert sich das Prophetentraditionsphänomen auf den Aussagewillen der Verfasser von Prophetenbüchern in einem relativ begrenzten nachexilischen Zeitraum, in dem der historische Prophetismus übrigens erloschen war. Wer mit einem langzeitigen und ständig interpretierenden Traditionsphänomen rechnet, dem verstellt sich der Blick auf die einzigartige Bedeutung der Verkündigung des neuen Heils. Diese kann getrost an die Stelle jener sich in der Überlieferung auftuenden göttlichen Sinniefe treten, vom Verfasser immer wieder im Anschluß an Kl. Koch "Metahistorie" genannt (cf. besonders 150, n. 42).

Diese Überlegung läßt davon abraten, Assur eine besondere Bedeutung zuzuerkennen, als ob etwa das Jesajabuch seine Jesajagestalt sukzessiv in die assyrische, die babylonische und die persische, wenn nicht gar in die griechische Epoche hineinsprechen lasse. In Wirklichkeit spielt die vorexilische Großmacht keine Rolle. Wo der Name auftaucht, ist er nach gut zu belegendem Brauch Chiffre für spätere Großmächte. Soweit Assur in echt jesajanischen Passagen vorkommt, hat das Buch eine entsprechende Neuinterpretation vollzogen (cf. J. Becker, *Isaias der Prophet und sein Buch* [SBS 30; Stuttgart 1968] 44-68). Im Gegensatz zu Assur liegen Babel und die Perser sehr wohl im Blickfeld des Jesajabuches, weil sie mit Exil und neuem Heil in Verbindung stehen. Das Buch kann daher *ex eventu* auf gewisse bedeutsame Details wie das Auftreten des Kyrus und eine stilisierte Heimkehr eingehen. Die geopolitischen Umbrüche der Alexanderzeit dagegen sind, falls die Redaktion sie gekannt hat, bezeichnenderweise ohne Bedeutung, wie es später auch beim Chronisten der Fall ist.

Die verschiedenen Prophetenbücher dürften entgegen der Ansicht des Verfassers (cf. etwa 19-21; 42-43; 101, n. 136) in ihrem Entstehen nicht interpretierend aufeinander bezogen sein. Die Reihenfolge hat von Jesaja bis Ezechiel und innerhalb des Dodekaprophetons rein chronologische Gründe, wobei zu bedenken ist, daß die Reihenfolge in der ersten Hälfte des Dodekaprophetons nicht einheitlich überliefert ist. Selbständigkeit schließt nicht aus, daß bestimmte Bücher übereinstimmendes Gepräge haben. So sind die Bücher Amos, Hosea und Jeremia deuteronomistisch gefärbt und hegen im Gegensatz zu den theokratisch denkenden Büchern Jesaja und Micha eine restaurative Königserwartung. Auch schlichte inhaltliche Abhängigkeiten etwa des Ezechielbuches vom Jeremiabuch, sind festzustellen.

An sich ist nichts dagegen einzuwenden, daß sich der Verfasser auf das Jesajabuch konzentriert. Doch kann dieses Buch in besonderer Weise zu Spekulationen verleiten, vor allem wenn Jes 40-66 nicht als Redaktionsbeitrag beim Erstellen des Buches anerkannt wird. Was aber wird aus dem Denken in Traditionsprozessen, wenn etwa das Ezechielbuch, seit 200 Jahren immer wieder als Pseudepigraphon enttarnt, als einheitliches Werk entstanden ist? Dann ist das Traditionsphänomen tatsächlich in Gefahr, "nur Konsequenz der Eigendynamik einer exegetischen Fragerichtung" zu sein (cf. 117).

Den Begriff der Pseudepigraphie meidet der Verfasser und spricht stattdessen von Relecture und ähnlichem. Und doch ist er der sachgerechte Begriff, wenn Texte einer Prophetengestalt attribuiert werden (cf. 170-177), wie dem Mose das Gesetz, David und andern Sängern die Psalmen sowie dem weisen Salomo die Weisheitsliteratur. Relecture ist passend, insofern vorgegebenen Texten ein neuer Sinn gegeben wird. Was die pseudepigraphisch arbeitende Apokalyptik betrifft, so räumt der Verfasser beiläufig ein, daß zwischen Prophetenbüchern und Apokalyptik mehr Kontinuität besteht, als heute gemeinhin angenommen wird (cf. 50-51, n. 69).

Vom Traditionsphänomen unterscheidet der Verfasser mit Recht die nachkanonische Rezeption (cf. 16-17; 129-137). Hinsichtlich der neutestamentlichen Rezeption ist ihm das Christusgeheimnis des Alten Testaments im Sinne des augustinischen "Novum Testamentum in Vetere

latet" fremd (cf. J. Becker, *Grundzüge einer Hermeneutik des Alten Testaments* [Frankfurt a.M. 1992] 78-129). Es bleibt beim bloßen Vorbildcharakter für eine christliche Begegnung mit der Bibel (cf. 177-204).

In der forschungsgeschichtlichen Orientierung wäre mit Bezug auf die "ältere Forschung" (138-139) ein Hinweis auf das Traditionsmodell der Skandinavischen Schule der dreißiger bis sechziger Jahre angebracht gewesen. Es rechnet mit einem Tradentenkreis, der in mündlicher Überlieferung gleitend aktualisiert und transformiert, ohne zu verfälschen. Ersetzt man die mündliche durch schreibende Überlieferung, fühlt man sich an das Traditionsmodell des Verfassers erinnert.

Wir werden jedoch ohne jede Mystifizierung des Entstehens der Prophetenbücher auskommen müssen und sollten auf historischkritischer Ebene jede Form eines unbewußt wohl vom Glauben gesteuerten Wunschbildes meiden. Die Verfasser der Prophetenbücher machen nicht den Eindruck, auf Sinnsuche zu sein, sondern wissen genau, was sie wollen, und nehmen alte Texte für ihre Sinngebung in Beschlag. Wirklich aufzeigbare Stationen der Überlieferung sind nur das Phänomen des historischen Prophetismus, der praktisch vorexilisch ist und wenig Schriftliches hinterlassen hat, und die nachexilische Gestaltung des biblischen Prophetenbildes, die auch außerhalb der Prophetenbücher anzutreffen ist (cf. J. Becker, "Historischer Prophetismus und biblisches Prophetenbild" [FS H. Reinelt; Stuttgart 1990] 11-23). Daß die biblische Gestaltung das historische Phänomen legitim darstellt, entfaltet, entschleiern und vereindeutigt, ist ohne das Licht des Glaubens nicht ansichtig zu machen.

Es stimmt nachdenklich, was die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft in 200 Jahren nicht alles an Theorien hervorgebracht hat. Was die Prophetenforschung angeht hat der Verfasser diesbezüglich warnende Worte gefunden (cf. 6-9), die natürlich auch für Gegenwart und Zukunft gelten.

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A.A. MACINTOSH, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Hosea* (ICC). Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1997. xcix-600 p. 14 x 21,5

De acuerdo con el carácter que la serie ICC ha mantenido a lo largo de todo un siglo, este importante comentario se especializa en los aspectos lingüísticos del libro de Oseas. Una tarea tanto más útil cuando se trata de un texto lleno de dificultades, que requiere a cada paso una aclaración. El autor se alinea entre los comentaristas y estudiosos que no suponen un estado materialmente corrompido del texto, y aboga por un conocimiento mayor del "lenguaje y dialecto" del profeta (lii). Su posición es matizada: el lenguaje de Oseas no es simplemente un "slang samaritano", que habría necesitado y sufrido una fuerte "normalización" a partir del hebreo judaíta después de la migración del libro hacia el sur. El libro era ya una obra

literaria más o menos completa antes de que se cumpliera ese proceso de transmisión y recepción.

Prueba de ello es que se encuentran en el texto pocas glosas aclaratorias (unas diez). Su presencia indica una cierta perplejidad de los tradentes frente al texto, pero garantiza al mismo tiempo que el texto sea el texto original. Es lógico pensar que no se escriben glosas marginales si se decide "normalizar" el texto.

M. descubre varios elementos dialectales (lvi): formas variantes del infinitivo, presencia del *hiphil* en lugar del *qal*, presencia de una forma *pe'al'al* y otras formas con reduplicaciones, y algunas particularidades sintácticas: la predilección por la construcción asindética, la comparación sucinta, el uso asindético de *th* para introducir un castigo inevitable, la repetición retórica del verbo, el uso del *bly* negativo y de *l* estrechamente ligado a un nombre para formar una "descripción sintáctica".

Pero es el vocabulario quien manifiesta más claramente el carácter dialectal del texto de Oseas. En un útil apéndice (pp. 585-593) M. indica unos 90 términos del libro de Oseas que revisten una particularidad. Esos términos son divididos en cuatro categorías: (a) palabras conocidas o bien conocidas del hebreo tradicional (*standard*) utilizadas por Oseas con una variante fonémica, morfológica o sintáctica; (b) palabras conocidas o bien conocidas del hebreo tradicional utilizadas por Oseas en un sentido diferente (variante semántica); (c) unas 20 palabras no frecuentes o *hapax* cuyo sentido M. determina por medio de lenguas emparentadas; (d) unos 6 aramaismo o posibles aramaismos (4 de ellos). Frecuentemente los términos pertenecen simultáneamente a las categorías (a) y (b); mientras en algunos casos la categoría (c) coincide con las categorías (b) y (d) o es alternativa a ellas.

En la asignación de los términos a las diferentes categorías, más que sobre autores modernos Macintosh se apoya decididamente sobre los comentarios medievales de Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Kimchi, y en particular sobre el tratado lexicográfico de Ibn Janah (s. X-XI) "El libro de las raíces" (A. Neubauer, [Ed.], *The Book of the Roots* [Oxford 1875]). Este tratado, porque está escrito en árabe, garantiza que Ibn Janah no establece indebidos parentescos con esta (ni con ninguna otra) lengua, a las cuales habría podido recurrir fácilmente. Su intento es encontrar en el conjunto de la Escritura los pasajes que permiten descubrir el sentido de una expresión en un pasaje particular. La crítica de M. — con referencia a la autoridad de J. Barr — a los autores contemporáneos que, por el contrario, deducirían con demasiada facilidad, de otras lenguas emparentadas, el significado concreto de un texto, parece hoy fuera de lugar. Baste pensar en el modo de trabajo del TWAT (vol. I-IX, el primero de los cuales es de 1973; el primer fascículo de 1970).

Si para la interpretación del texto de Oseas se recurre a la filología comparada, se debe preferir el arameo y el siríaco, y el árabe. Sin embargo, M. deja abierta la puerta a posibles confirmaciones de parte del ugarítico o del acádico. Por el contrario, el recurso a las versiones antiguas parece en general superfluo. M. se mantiene fiel al MT, y se aparta de él con cuatro correcciones consonánticas, de las cuales Os 11,3.11 encuentran apoyo en las versiones. Opta por el texto del Mar Muerto (4QpHos) en

tres casos, y sugiere la posibilidad de seguir 4QpHos^b en 8,6. En siete casos ha introducido una corrección del texto vocálico, con probable apoyo de las versiones en tres de ellos.

Como conjunto, el texto recibido es así el texto post-exílico dejado por los redactores judaítas, en el cual han añadido algunas correcciones, adiciones o glosas. Este texto ha servido de base a las versiones. A partir de la adiciones se puede hipotizar en casos concretos el texto efraimita que habría sido recibido en Jerusalén. La posición de Macintosh difiere por tanto radicalmente del intento de reconstrucción de un texto original, tal como ha procurado todavía, entre los autores recientes, P. G. Borbone, *Il libro del profeta Osea. Edizione critica del testo ebraico* (Torino 1987).

M. no duda en atribuir a Oseas la categoría de un “maestro del lenguaje” (lxi). Su maestría se manifiesta en la elocuente expresión de sus sentimientos, que coinciden con los de Jahvé, en el uso de comparaciones y metáforas, en formas menores de estilo como construcciones asindéticas, repeticiones enfáticas, aliteraciones y asonancias, juegos de palabras. M. considera que la disputa judicial es uno de los géneros de Oseas, sin coincidir con el gran comentario de H. W. Wolff, *Dodekapropheten 1. Hosea* (BKAT XIV/1; 2ª ed. Neukirchen 1965) que vería en el texto de Oseas una presencia demasiado frecuente y matizada de géneros literarios “judiciales”. M. llama la atención correctamente sobre el tono particularmente meditativo de los capítulos 9 a 13. Menos precisa parece la atribución de algunos textos, p. ej. 6,1-3; 14,2-5, a un género “plegaria”, que incluiría una exhortación del profeta, a la cual seguiría una confesión ideal de Efraím o una afirmación de su seguridad en el apoyo divino.

La precisión y calidad del estilo de Oseas, sumada a la falta de (casi) cualquier referencia a una relación del profeta con sus contemporáneos, con el rey, los sacerdotes, o el pueblo, sugiere que el libro haya sido desde el primer momento un texto escrito, y no el reflejo, transmitido oralmente, de una actividad profética, como la que se supone habitualmente para los profetas de Israel. La decidida afirmación de Macintosh, que Oseas habría ejercido un “ministerio profético” que se manifiesta en el libro es verosímil, mientras no se insista sobre la categoría “ministerio”, pero está apoyada sobre magros fundamentos. El recurso a Os 9,7 como una citación que Oseas hace de sus adversarios, y que demuestra la reacción de aquellos frente a su predicación, no es suficiente. No es evidente que el texto sea efectivamente una cita, y no más bien una reflexión de Oseas sobre la situación del pueblo, confundido por la presencia de profetas irresponsables y de carismáticos exaltados. Que los títulos de “profeta” y “hombre de dios” se apliquen a Oseas requiere demostración. Estrictamente podría entrar en la categoría de los textos meditativos, en los cuales el profeta reflexiona sobre el presente y el futuro de la nación. Una verosímil actividad profética de Oseas se debe deducir más bien de los imperativos plurales (p. ej. 4,1; 5,1; 5,8; 9,1) y de los textos dirigidos a una segunda persona en plural o, a veces, en singular colectivo, que no puede ser sino un grupo o bien el conjunto del pueblo (por ejemplo Os 4,5; 4,13-15; 13,9).

De hecho M. atribuye a la actividad pública del profeta Os 4; 5,1-7; 5,8-14; 6,7-7,7; 7,8-8,14. Es menos verosímil que Os 2,4-15 formara parte directa de su predicación. En H. Simian-Yofre, *El desierto de los dioses*.

Teología e historia en el libro de Oseas (Córdoba, España, 1993) 23-60; 181-189, he notado largamente y con matices la integración de la experiencia personal y de la palabra profética como una clave de lectura de su profecía. Macintosh opta por una formulación menos explícita cuando habla de elementos privados y personales, que se distinguen de otros, aptos para ser proclamados públicamente. Afirma sin embargo claramente que los capítulos 1-3 de Oseas reflejan un momento de la vida del profeta, y no son ni una alegoría ni una parábola. En realidad la totalidad de la proclamación del profeta está influenciada por esa experiencia personal, que parece haber determinado también la elección de las tradiciones de Israel a las cuales recurre: Guibea es también una trágica historia matrimonial; en la historia de Jacob (Os 12), se entrelazan, como en la propia vida del profeta, los acontecimientos domésticos con las exigencias divinas; la relación de Jahvé con su pueblo en el desierto tiene acentos de écloga amorosa, como lo hace notar Macintosh.

Que Os 5,15 “me volveré a mi lugar”, pronunciado por Jahvé, quiera indicar en clave también el retiro de Oseas, después de una fase de predicación, a su vida privada y a la composición de sus “meditaciones”, es una afirmación sugestiva, pero no apoyada en argumentos consistentes. La categoría de “textos meditativos” que usa M. es legítima. Tales textos aparecen particularmente a partir de 9,10. Pero no se puede excluir que textos dirigidos a un destinatario concreto y presente puedan tener también aquí y allí un carácter “meditativo”.

A partir de la premisa de que el libro de Oseas sea una composición literaria construida sobre la base de oráculos públicamente predicados y ampliaciones personales, más algunas meditaciones sobre aquellos, M. concluye que sin duda el profeta es el autor y compositor del libro, ayudado tal vez por un “escriba personal” (lxix). Parecería que estas conclusiones van decididamente más lejos de lo que permiten las premisas. Sería probablemente más fructuoso para la exégesis reemplazar definitivamente el problema de las relaciones entre la actividad profética, el autor del texto y las *ipsissima* verba del profeta por la discusión más realista de la relación entre el texto recibido, finalmente anónimo, los vestigios de actividad profética que refleja, y la presencia de la comunidad o de las comunidades que recibieron el texto como normativo.

Macintosh es notablemente discreto en la determinación de las modificaciones posteriores al texto proveniente del autor Oseas (tal vez sería mejor hablar de “texto de base”). Atribuye a la redacción judaíta 14 intervenciones por un modesto total de 13 versos. (Su atribución coincide en buena parte, tanto en el número como en la determinación de los pasajes donde aparecen, con la que hago en mi propio comentario, *El desierto de los dioses*, 255-263).

La cronología propuesta para la actividad de Oseas es la tradicional, compartida por numerosos comentadores. Al recensente, sin embargo, causa dificultad suponer un período de 30 años de actividad (lxxxiii) como fundamento de un texto tan breve, y sobretudo tan homogéneo en sus temas y motivos. Puesto que el pago de tributos al poder dominante, el envío de embajadas para buscar el apoyo de una gran potencia en contra de otra, y las deportaciones de grupos de los pueblos vencidos eran moneda corriente

en las operaciones político-militares del tiempo, el texto no ofrece casi ningún dato para asociar claramente algún acontecimiento a algún texto de Oseas. Interpretar aún Os 5,8-6,6 como referencia a la guerra siro-efraimita (cf. A. Alt, "Hosea 5,8-6,6. Ein Krieg und seine Folgen in prophetischer Beleuchtung" [*Kleine Schriften* II; München ³1964] 163-187) es un acto de devoción al gran maestro. Pero la interpretación es difícil de sostener ya, vista la cantidad de hipótesis y cambios textuales que supone (cf. *El desierto de los dioses*, 85).

Por el contrario, las expresiones que sugieren alguna situación más particular, pueden ubicarse en un período bastante preciso de siete u ocho meses, o tal vez de un año. Este período está caracterizado por la confusión y vacancia de poder ocurridas entre la muerte de Jeroboam II, el asesinato de su hijo y último descendiente en el trono, Zacarías, por mano del traidor Salum seis meses después, el asesinato de éste un mes después por manos de Menajem, y se concluye con su establecimiento firme en el trono. Os 6,8-9 puede pues referirse no a la conspiración de Pécaj contra Pecajías hacia el 735 sino a este período entre los años 747-746 (o 748-747). La historia personal de Oseas y del nacimiento de sus hijos puede haber precedido en parte este período y ser contemporánea de él.

Macintosh hace una convincente exposición de la organicidad del mensaje de Oseas. La referencia a la política sincretista del estado, a la importancia del becerro de Samaria (y no de Dan, si es que alguna vez existió), a las contaminaciones de la religión de estado como causa de la enfermedad de la monarquía de su tiempo (lxxxix), a la declarada polémica del profeta contra el *hieros gamos* entre Baal y la tierra, que debía ser reemplazado por el matrimonio entre Jahvé y su pueblo (Os 2,18-25), son todos aspectos importantes del mensaje de Oseas, que el comentario deja en claro.

La elaboración de este amplio comentario ha debido tomar un largo tiempo (cf. la explicación sobre algunas ausencias importantes de bibliografía, ix). La traducción de K. J. Cathcart-R. P. Gordon, *The Targum of the Minor Prophets* (Wilmington, DE 1989) no pudo ser utilizada más ampliamente porque en ese momento el comentario había hecho ya considerable progreso (lxxxi, n. 20). Probablemente ese largo período de composición es responsable de que la bibliografía, muy amplia hasta los años 80, incluyendo varios comentarios del siglo pasado, apenas menciona algún título a partir de 1985, y en cuanto puedo ver, ninguna de las monografías o comentarios publicados desde entonces. El autor ha renunciado así a aspectos literarios, antropológicos, y de historia de las religiones, que hubieran podido enriquecer su comentario filológico. Esta falta se manifiesta también en la predilección del autor por la discusión de las unidades menores, con menor atención a la percepción de las articulaciones mayores. Pero "non omnia possumus omnes". Y de todos modos este comentario continuará a prestar por mucho tiempo una importante ayuda para la lectura de Oseas y la discusión filológica, en particular por el abundante material de comentarios medievales que pone a la fácil disposición del lector.

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Th. M. BOLIN, *Freedom beyond Forgiveness. The Book of Jonah Re-Examined.* (JSOTS 236 - Copenhagen International Seminar 3). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1997. 217 p. 16 x 24. £35.00 - \$50.00

This book is a revision of Bolin's doctoral dissertation for Marquette University, Milwaukee (WI) in 1995. In his preface the author presents his ambitious program: "(this book) questions the interpretative judgements, assumptions and methodologies of much of the modern exegesis of Jonah. It also critiques as inherently flawed the dominant method in biblical studies which uses Israelite history and the Bible to mutually support and explain each other". Although Bolin will use the "standard historical tools, lacking in many of the newer literary approaches", he intends to do so free "from the failed attempts of traditional biblical scholarship to assign a date or detect a historical background for the book. An interpretation of Jonah is offered independent of any historical speculation derived from the hypothetical reconstruction of Israelite history" (7). Bolin's conclusions concerning the interpretation of Jonah are novel. The most amazing one is that the issue in Jonah is not the extension of God's mercy to the gentiles but only the absolute freedom and sovereignty of God over all creation. Bolin tries to prove this thesis in the main part of his book (chapters 2-5 corresponding to the four chapters in Jonah) that looks very much like a commentary.

The opening chapter surveys the history of the exegesis of Jonah. Bolin's own views and methodological principles are gradually presented in chapters 2-5 and when he discusses the opinions of other exegetes. Source and redaction criticism take a special beating. Bolin rejects the principles on which they are based, the detection of tensions, lacunae, doublets, inconsistencies, etc. and their explanation as a combination of different sources and redactions, because they assume that "biblical authors exhibit a superhuman level of sophistication and rigidity matched only by an equally extreme incompetence on the part of the redactors" (100). There is certainly some truth in this critique of the overly-analytical speculative exegesis of some exegetes who discover a whole series of sources and redactions in a text and leave it with almost no coherence if all the "additions" are deleted. But Bolin seems to overreact in the other direction. For example he argues for the originality of the psalm in Jonah 2 because beginning with the earliest Mss the psalm is found in its present place and so it must have been part of the book from the start. This is an inappropriate mixture of textual criticism and redaction criticism. Moreover it does not do justice to the long-recognised tensions between the psalm and the surrounding narrative chapters. Bolin gives a list of six such tensions on p. 99; a seventh can be added: the masculine *dāg* is used in 2,1.11 — the narrative part of the chapter — as opposed to fem. *dāgā* in the psalm. The simplest hypothesis is not even considered: the psalm already existed and the author of Jonah used it, because it so well expressed Jonah's partial change of mind in the belly of the fish. A second methodological consideration, one heartily to be welcomed, is Bolin's intention to

investigate which texts (biblical and extra-biblical) are referred to by the author of Jonah and which motifs and literary traditions (biblical and extra-biblical) are utilised in the text, in order to detect the meaning of the author. This method was already used extensively by J. Sasson, *Jonah* (AB 24B; Garden City 1990); but while Sasson most often referred to Ugaritic and Accadian parallels, Bolin pays more attention to parallels in Greek and even Latin sources. This leads him at the end of his analysis to date Jonah to the Hellenistic period, an issue to which I shall return.

One of the most striking elements in the first chapter is Jonah's flight as a response to his call. According to Bolin this however is not intended to be humorous or shocking, but simply to set the context of the following storm. The prophet's flight is no different from Moses' or Jeremiah's protest against their call. For Bolin Jonah continues to act as a prophet throughout the whole story. His going to sleep in the hold of the ship is a prophetic trance (with reference to Gen 15,2; Job 4,13; 33,15). His credo, in response to the sailors' questions, is not a confession; and his recommendation that he be cast overboard is not prompted by compassion in order to save the sailors' lives. In the storm the sailors' and the captain's behaviour involves an ever-increasing fear that still remains after they are saved at the end of the chapter. This fear, the offering sacrifices and the vows, are not an indication of their conversion to Yahwism, but the normal practice on board a ship in such a perilous situation. Bolin compares their final plea in v. 14 with the apotropaic rite in Deut 21,1-9: the sacrifice of a heifer for the expiation of a murder when the culprit is unknown. In all this the author's purpose becomes obvious: compared with the unlimited power and freedom of Yhwh all human efforts are futile. God is free to save or destroy apart from any notion of guilt or innocence. In the psalm Jonah makes the same statement as the sailors did when they appealed to Yhwh. The last phrase of the psalm: "deliverance belongs to Yhwh" (2,10) can especially be compared with the sailors' statement in 1,14: "Yhwh does whatever He pleases".

Bolin reserves most of his study on Jonah 3 to the four aspects of "Nineveh": the historical city, the "great city" in Jonah, the enemy of Israel, and the long-gone exotic city of Nineveh known from Greek literature. According to Bolin it is in that literature that one finds a description of Nineveh that best matches the "great city" in Jonah 3. A second major theme of the chapter is divine repentance along with the rhetorical phrase "who knows?". Bolin looks at the texts in the Old Testament where God repents (*nĥm*) and concludes that in the majority of cases divine repentance does not preclude an act of destruction (on the contrary; cf. Gen 6,6; Exod 32; Judg 2,18; 1 Sam 15,35; 2 Sam 24; Amos 7,1-9...). Only in four texts (Pss 106,45; 135,14; Jer 31,19 and Joel 2,14) is divine repentance not followed by punishment. Therefore it cannot be excluded that Nineveh too will subsequently be destroyed, as is known from some Greek texts. Already in Jonah 1,6 the captain, when he called Jonah, expressed his uncertainty about God's intentions. This is reiterated by the king's question: "who knows?". In five cases in the OT the question admits the possibility of a positive change in the situation; in only one (Joel 2,14) does divine blessing follow the question: but this text is dependent on Jonah, and is

thus ruled out as a parallel. Consequently, the king's question in line with the majority of OT texts should be assumed to have a negative answer: God will not spare the city.

The book's last chapter gives Jonah and Yhwh exactly the same number of words, this hinting that the debate is not brought to a close. On the contrary, the issue of God's absolute and even capricious freedom prevents any hope of a resolution. In a final remark in Jonah 4,10-11 God teaches Jonah this insight by using an argument *a fortiori* in which both examples (the plant and Nineveh) correspond. If Jonah is sorry for the plant that he did not care for and that was destroyed in one night, should God then be sorry for Nineveh, the great city, that He did not care for, and whose inhabitants are foolish (they do not know the difference between right hand and their left), and that will now be destroyed? The answer is definitely 'no'. Consequently Jonah is being told not to worry about the plant and about everything else he did not invest in. Crucial for Bolin's understanding of the last chapter is the place of Jonah 4,2 in the Old Testament tradition about Yhwh's punishment and forgiveness. Other key texts are Exod 34 (of which Bolin considers Jonah 4,2 an abridged quotation leaving aside the element of punishment); Num 14; Nah 1; Neh 9; Pss 86, 103, 145 and Joel 2. All these texts except Psalm 103 and Joel 2 speak about the punishment of the guilty. Again the majority of these texts leaves no doubt that, although Yhwh is merciful, he punishes the guilty. Consequently the ultimate punishment of Nineveh as well is a natural conclusion.

This (too short) résumé does not do justice to all the wealth of new insights Bolin's study yields. Unfortunately, there is some additional evidence, which Bolin has overlooked and which seriously undermines his conclusions. I can only give a few observations here; a full treatment of all his arguments would require a lengthy article.

Bolin does not take into account the symbolic meaning of Tarsis. He sees Tarsis as just a normal destination for a ship sailing from Joppa. However Tarsis' localisation (wherever it exactly was) at the opposite extreme from Nineveh, gives Jonah's flight (*and* Nineveh as Tarsis' opposite) an extra dimension. Since it could take three years for the return trip from Tarsis (1 Kgs 10,22) Jonah certainly planned to stay away for more than the 40 days that remained for the Ninevites to repent.

On the other hand the portrayal of Nineveh in Greek literature — the idyllic great city, full of gross excess, exotic opulence which ended up being utterly destroyed — does *not* match the way Nineveh is pictured in the Old Testament itself, not even in Jonah. The few meagre resemblances that Bolin discovers between Jonah and Greek literature (on p. 140) are not convincing, e.g. that the king of Nineveh in Jonah shows no sense of government (like the king of Nineveh in Aristotle and Strabo) is not obvious in the text. It would be more obvious to see Nineveh as the symbol of Assur's threat as this appears in the books of Kings (containing the only other reference to Jonah in the OT!); the mortal, cruel enemy of Israel. Bolin himself refers to the mention of Jonah in 2 Kgs 14,25-27 as the key for resolving the enigmas in the book of Jonah. Why does he disregard this clue in favour of much later Greek texts? His dating of Jonah to Hellenistic times is of no help because this is itself based on the

identification of the Nineveh in Jonah with the Nineveh in Greek texts. This makes for a circular argumentation. Moreover, such reasoning is not at all absent elsewhere in Bolin's argument, e.g. when he tries to prove that Joel 2,13-14 used Jonah, and not the other way around as is traditionally held. When treating the theme of divine repentance Bolin separates Jonah 4,2 from Joel 2,13-14 because in Joel the question: who knows whether Yhwh will turn and repent?, is answered positively, in contrast to Jonah (3,9). He classifies this, in spite of 3,10 that clearly says Yhwh repented and did not do the evil he intended, with the negative answers, because in the majority of the OT texts punishment follows and because Joel 2,13-14 is later than Jonah. Later he will use this same dubious separation as an argument in order to date Joel 2,13-14 later than Jonah.

Another instance of Bolin's overlooking evidence is found in his word study of *yhwh n̄hm*. He lists Gen 6,6; Exod 32; Judg 2,18; 1 Sam 15,35; 2 Sam 24 and Amos 7,1-9, (the majority) as texts that say that Yhwh repents but not that he will forego destruction. Only a minority (Pss 106,45; 135,14; Jer 31,19; Joel 2,14) mention divine repentance without reference to punishment. According to Bolin Jonah should be classified with the majority. Apart from this dubious inclusion of Gen 6,6; Judg 2,18; 1 Sam 15,35 in the list (e.g. in Gen 6,6 Yhwh does not repent of his plans for disaster but of the fact that he had created man), it remains unclear why Jer 20,16; 26,3.13.19 are not taken into account by Bolin. Their vocabulary (apart from *yhwh n̄hm* also *šwb* and even *hpk*) is closer to Jonah and in most of them an alternative is offered: if you reform (*šwb*) from evil Yhwh will repent and not destroy you; otherwise He will punish you. In my view this is precisely what Jonah is about.

These differences of opinion with Bolin should not obscure the benefits his book provides. We should thank him for his innovative and challenging ideas about a very disputed Old Testament book.

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Oswald LORETZ, *Des Gottes Einzigkeit*. Ein altorientalisches Argumentationsmodell zum "Schma Jisrael". Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997. x-204p. 14 x 22. DM68 - SFr 62 - ÖS 496, —

Der Vf. erweitert und vertieft in der vorliegenden Monographie die Einsichten, die er früher in einem Festschriftbeitrag verbreitet hatte ("Die Einzigkeit Jahwes [Dtn 6,4] im Licht des ugaritischen Baal-Mythos", *Vom Alten Orient zum Alten Testament*. FS. Wolfram von Soden [Hrsg. M. Dietrich - O. Loretz] [AOAT 240; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1995] 215-305). Das Hauptbekenntnis Israels (Dtn 6,4) wird vor dem Hintergrund der andauernden Monotheismusdebatte im Lichte der biblischen sowie der

altorientalischen und altägyptischen Quellen untersucht, wobei auch seine Wirkungsgeschichte innerhalb der großen monotheistischen Religionen berücksichtigt wird. Im Blick auf die Wirkungsgeschichte stellt sich heraus, daß die Anwendung des Begriffs "Monotheismus" als Proprium der drei Religionen problematisch ist, weil der neuzeitliche Begriff "Monotheismus" einerseits dem biblischen Sachverhalt nicht entspricht und andererseits im Judentum, Christentum und Islam ganz verschieden verstanden wird (158-159). "Unser Vater" Abraham trennt eher als eint die drei Religionen — was auch in den interreligiösen Gesprächen berücksichtigt werden sollte.

Hinsichtlich der ursprünglichen Bedeutung des *Sch'ma*^c-Bekenntnisses nimmt der Vf. zu acht in der Forschungsgeschichte vorgeschlagenen Lösungstypen, nach denen es sich beim *Sch'ma*^c um eine Aussage über Jahwes wesenhafte "Einheit" ("Jahwe ist einer" o. dgl.) im Gegensatz zu seinen angeblich vielfachen Erscheinungsformen an verschiedenen Kultorten handelt, weist er mit den Argumenten zurück, daß die Forderung des einen und einzigen Kultortes im Deuteronomium nie mit Jahwes "Einheit" begründet wird und daß diese Interpretation keine Spuren in der biblischen Wirkungsgeschichte von Dtn 6,4b hinterlassen hat. Vielmehr trete diese Deutung erst unter dem Einfluß der griechischen Philosophie in Erscheinung (bei Philo von Alexandrien) und sei von dort sowohl in die jüdische wie auch christliche Theologie eingedrungen. Dagegen entscheidet sich der Vf. für die Lösung, nach der Dtn 6,4b als eine streng nach den Regeln des *parallelismus membrorum* aufgebaute Bekenntnisaussage zu verstehen ist, die aus zwei parallelen Sätzen besteht und folgendermaßen zu übersetzen ist: "Jahwe ist unser Gott // Jahwe ist einzig! "Damit hat der Vf. sicherlich das Richtige getroffen (cf. T. Veijola, "Höre Israel! Der Sinn und Hintergrund von Deuteronomium VI 4-9", VT 42 [1992] 528-541) und alle weiteren Spekulationen über Jahwes "Einheit" und "Einfachheit" im Zusammenhang von Dtn 6,4b überflüssig gemacht. Allerdings ist Jahwes "Einzigkeit" nicht im neuzeitlichen Sinne des absoluten Monotheismus zu verstehen, sondern sie beschreibt — nicht anders als der vorangehende, parallele Satz "Jahwe ist unser Gott" — schlicht die besondere Beziehung, die zwischen Jahwe und Israel bestehen soll, will aber nicht die Existenz anderer Götter prinzipiell leugnen. Erst später, im Laufe einer gesteigerten Auseinandersetzung mit anderen Göttern (cf. Deuteriojesaja), ergibt sich die Einsicht, daß Israels Gott der einzige überhaupt existierende Gott sei.

Der originalste Beitrag der Arbeit liegt in Erhellung des altorientalischen Hintergrunds vom *Sch'ma*^c. In den mesopotamischen und Ägyptischen Quellen findet der Vf. nach einer kritischen Prüfung keine Aussage, die die Einzigkeit eines Gottes auf eine mit Dtn 6,4b vergleichbare Weise zum Ausdruck bringe, obwohl dort häufig von Einzigkeit und Unvergleichlichkeit verschiedener Götter die Rede ist, aber stets im Rahmen eines polytheistischen Systems. Etwas überraschend ist in einer Arbeit, in der die Forschungsgeschichte sonst ausführlich berücksichtigt wird, das vollständige Schweigen über die neueste Theorie des Assyriologen Simo Parpola, der aufgrund eines detaillierten Vergleichs des Motivs vom Lebensbaum in der jüdischen Kabbala und in der mesopotamischen Ikonographie behauptet, der (israelitisch-)jüdische Monotheismus stamme aus Assyrien, wo der Gott Assur in Wirklichkeit

die Idee des einen und einzigen, universalen Gottes repräsentiere (S. Parpola, "The Assyrian Tree of Life: Tracing the Origins of Jewish Monotheism and Greek Philosophy", *JNES* 52 [1993] 161-208). Die mit Vehemenz vertretene These Parpola hätte eine kritische Würdigung vom Kenner des Faches verdient.

Weniger überraschend ist dagegen die eigene These des Vf.s, nach der das *Sch^cma^c* seine genaueste sprachliche und inhaltliche Entsprechung in Ras Shamra/Ugarit habe. In Frage kommt eine Stelle innerhalb des Baal-Zyklus (KTU 1.4 VII49b-52a), wo der Wettergott Baal von sich selbst sagt:

*Einzig (ahdy) bin ich es, der herrscht über die Götter,
der fett macht Götter und Menschen,
der sättigt die Mengen der Erde!*

Die Stelle enthält nach dem Vf. den einzigen ugaritischen Beleg für *ahdy* in der Bedeutung "meine Einzigkeit" = "ich allein, einzig, ausschließlich" und ist direkt vergleichbar mit dem אֶחָד des biblischen *Sch^cma^c*-Bekenntnisses. Ebenso wenig wie die Einzigkeit Jahwes nach Dtn 6,4b beinhaltet die Einzigkeit Baals die Ablehnung oder Negation anderer Götter, sondern die Aussage besagt in ihrem polytheistischen Kontext nur, daß unter allen Göttern Baal als Wettergott und Regenspender allein die Fähigkeit besitzt, die Untergebenen mit allem zu versorgen, was zum glücklichen Leben gehört (57). Von dieser Parallele her versteht der Vf. den Sinn des *Sch^cma^c* dahingehend, "daß Jahwe der Gott seines Volkes in der Weise ist, daß er einzig, allein, ausschließlich in der Lage ist, ihm die zum Leben und Glück notwendigen Güter zu geben, daß Jahwe der einzige ist, der wirklich als König herrscht" (76). Damit wird das *Sch^cma^c* auch inhaltlich in eine enge Beziehung mit der Selbstvorstellung Baals gebracht und in ihm eine Stellungnahme gegen Baal gesehen: Nicht Baal, sondern Jahwe, der Gott Israels, ist der einzige, der seinem Volk all das zu geben vermag, was die Menschen von einem Gott als ihrem Lebensquell und Beschützer erwarten (73).

Die These setzt voraus, daß bei der Formulierung des *Sch^cma^c* der Baal-Mythos Pate gestanden habe. Auf die Frage, wie die Kenntnis von dem um Jahrhunderte älteren ugaritischen Mythos nach Israel gekommen und dort lebendig geblieben sei, antwortet der Vf. mit dem Verweis auf den Kult (83). Die streng poetische Form des *Sch^cma^c* spricht nach ihm für die Annahme, daß das Bekenntnis seine Vorgeschichte im voralexandrischen Kult Israels hat. Weil die Formel vom Einzigkeitsanspruch im Baal-Mythos in Zusammenhang mit der Thronbesteigung Baals beim Neujahrsfest im Herbst auftritt, sei damit zu rechnen, daß das Thronbesteigungsfest Jahwes, von dessen Existenz die Thronbesteigungspsalmen Zeugnis ablegen, die ursprüngliche kultische Heimat des *Sch^cma^c* gewesen sei (83). Sachlich gesehen bestehe kein Unterschied, ob von König- oder Gottsein eines Gottes gesprochen wird.

In der Tat erscheint das *Sch^cma^c*-Bekenntnis als eine eschatologisch und universalistisch erweiterte Aussage in Sach 14,9, wo Jahwes Einzigkeit mit seinem Königtum eng verbunden wird: "Dann wird Jahwe zum König

werden über die ganze Erde. An jenem Tag wird Jahwe einzig (יְהוָה) sein und sein Name einzig (יְהוָה)". Auffallend bleibt jedoch, daß die Thronbesteigungspsalmen selbst keine entsprechende Aussage über Jahwe kennen und daß im Dtn Jahwe nie — Dtn 33,5 im Mosesegen ist ein Problem für sich, das nichts mit dem eigentlichen Dtn zu tun hat — als göttlicher König auftritt. Das Fehlen einer expliziten Aussage über Jahwe als König im *Sch^{ma}* erklärt der Vf. mit der Auskunft, "daß das Königtum in Jerusalem zur Zeit der Letztgestaltung der Formel die ehemaligen kultischen und staatlichen Funktionen bereits eingebüßt hatte" (114). Wäre dies der Fall gewesen, dann würde man kaum erwarten, daß der einzige Text, der Jahwes Einzigkeit mit seinem Königtum verbindet (Sach 14,9), anerkanntermaßen erst nachexilischen Ursprungs ist. Dazu kommt, daß nach einer früheren Arbeit des Vf.s über die Thronbesteigungspsalmen das Verbum מָלַךְ vorexilisch nur in Ps 29,10 und Ps 47,9 für die Königsherrschaft Jahwes verwendet wird, während alle anderen Belege in den Thronbesteigungsliedern (Ps 93,1; 96,10; 97,1; 99,1) sekundäre, nachexilische Bildungen seien (O. Loretz, *Ugarit-Texte und Thronbesteigungspsalmen* [Ug.-Biblische Literatur 7; Münster 1988] 429-434).

Ganz unabhängig davon, wie man sich zu diesem Ergebnis stellt, ist auf jeden Fall klar, daß es weder in vor- noch nachexilischer Zeit ideologische Bedenken gegen eine explizite Rede vom Königtum Jahwes gegeben hätte, wenn man Jahwe als Antagonisten des göttlichen Königs Baal darstellen wollte. Dies gilt umso eher, wenn man mit dem Vf. in Dtn 6,4b eine ursprünglich selbständige Formel erblickt, die allein existierte. Wenn dies der Fall war, dann hat es keinen Sinn, eine noch ältere, etwa königliche Vorform hinter der jetzigen "Letztgestaltung" der Formel zu vermuten. Dtn 6,4b stellt in der "Jetztgestaltung" eine vollkommen abgerundete, ursprüngliche Aussage dar.

Allerdings darf man nicht außer acht lassen, daß Dtn 6,4-9 der älteste Kontext ist, aus dem wir das *Sch^{ma}* kennen, was nicht ohne Bedeutung für die Ermittlung seiner Funktion ist. Leider kommt die Analyse des dtn Kontextes beim Vf. zu kurz. Zwar räumt er ein, daß "die Kombination von V.4b mit 5 insgesamt ein redaktionelles Produkt darstellt" (82, cf. Veijola, "Das Bekenntnis Israels. Beobachtungen zur Geschichte und Theologie von Dtn 6,4-9", *ThZ* 48 [1992] 369-381), darüber hinaus äußert er aber die völlig unnötige alternative Vermutung, nach der V. 4b eventuell "als ein Einschub zwischen Dtn 6,4a und 5" anzusehen sei, "der sogar den ursprünglichen Text vor 'diese Worte' V.6 verdrängt haben könnte" (82). Damit möchte der Vf. offenbar die Eigenständigkeit des *Sch^{ma}* gegenüber seinem jetzigen Kontext verteidigen. Es stellt sich allerdings die Frage, ob der Kontext (Vv. 4-9) ohne V. 4b noch lebensfähig sei. Eine direkte Verbindung des Höraufrufs (V.4a) mit dem Liebesgebot (V. 5) würde gezwungen wirken ("Höre Israel und liebe Jahwe, deinen Gott..."), weil nicht gesagt würde, was gehört werden soll (cf. anders in Dtn 4,1; 5,1; 9,1; 20,3; 27,9). Die Vermutung vom eventuell ausgefallenen, angeblich "ursprünglichen" Text von V. 4b, auf den "diese Worte" in V. 6 einst Bezug genommen hätten, ist hingegen reine Spekulation, die nicht beweisbar und außerdem überflüssig ist. Wie Othmar Keel nachgewiesen

hat, handelt es sich bei Dtn 6,8-9, die den Anlaß zum jüdischen Gebrauch der Tefillin und Mezuzot gegeben haben, um konkrete, sichtbare Zeichen der Verbundenheit, die viele Vorbilder im alten Orient und Ägypten haben (O. Keel, "Zeichen der Verbundenheit", *Mélanges Dominique Barthélemy. Études bibliques offertes à l'occasion de son 60e anniversaire* [ed. P. Casetti - O. Keel - A. Schenker] [OBO 38; Fribourg - Göttingen 1981] 159-240). Allerdings blieb bei Keel offen, was der genaue Inhalt "dieser Worte" (V. 6) war, die durch die konkreten Maßnahmen veranschaulicht werden sollten (Keel, 166, 195, 216-217). Nachdem aber nachgewiesen wurde, daß sowohl der Relativsatz "die ich dir heute gebiete" hinter "diesen Worten" in V.6 wie auch das ganze Liebesgebot V. 5 redaktionelle Ergänzungen darstellen (Veijola, "Bekenntnis", 370-376), erhielten "diese Worte" und die Vorschriften zu ihrer Ausführung einen klaren Bezug und Inhalt: V. 4b in der Jetztgestalt.

Als Ergänzung zu Keels und meinen eigenen Studien sei hier hinzugefügt, daß die konkrete Ausführung des *Sch'ma'* offenbar ursprünglich auch die Vorschrift von V.6* ("Diese Worte sollen auf deinem Herzen sein") betraf. Damit war kaum eine nur geistige Aneignung und Verinnerlichung "dieser Worte" gemeint, wie die Stelle gewöhnlich verstanden wurde (auch von Keel, 161, 165, und mir VT 1992, 536), sondern es wurde eine konkrete Anweisung gegeben, sie als Inschrift auf einem Amulett auf der Brust zu tragen. Im Hebräischen gibt es kein besondere Wort für die menschliche Brust, sondern dafür wird das Wort "Herz" (לב *leb*) verwendet (cf. Ex 28,29-30; Hld 8,6; Nah 2,8). Gerade die nächsten Sprachparallelen für Dtn 6,6t (und Dtn 11,18), Ex 28,29-30 und Hld 8,6, die von einer auf der Brust zu tragenden Orakeltasche des Hohenpriesters bzw. einem auf der Brust befindlichen Siegelamulett handeln, legen die konkrete Bedeutung von 6,6* nahe. Zuden beweisen die im Hinnomtal aufgefundenen Silberblättchen, die Teile des priesterlichen Segens enthalten, daß man am Körper Amulette mit kunen Bibeltexen trug. Weil die Brust der gewöhnliche Ort zum Tragen von Amuletten verschiedenen, auch heidnischen Inhalts (cf. Ez 14,3-4; 20,7) war, wird in 6* an die herkömmliche Sitte anknüpfend die Vorschrift gegeben, das *Sch'ma'*-Bekenntnis von V. 4b als ein neuartiges Amulett auf der Brust anzubringen. Erst später an der Parallelstelle Dtn 11,18 erfolgt die Spiritualisierung der Vorschrift, wenn befohlen wird, die Worte "auf euer Herz und auf eure Seele" zu nehmen (vgl. Spr 6,21, auch Spr 3,3; 7,3; Jer 17,1; 31,33).

Aus alldem ergibt sich m.E. zwingend, daß das *Sch'ma'* nach seinem ältesten literarischen Kontext das Bekenntnis einer Gruppe war ("Jahwe ist *unser* Gott"), die damit ihre programmatische Bindung an Jahwe als ihren einzigen Gott im privaten wie auch im öffentlichen Leben bekanntmachen wollte. Die Weitergabe der Tradition an die jüngere Generation sollte in der Familie durch die allgegenwärtige Sichtbarkeit und wiederholende Rezitation der Formel geschehen (V. 7). Nichts in Dtn 6,4-9 weist auf einen kultischen Sitz im Leben der Formel hin, was natürlich nicht ausschließt, daß sie auch dort Verwendung gefunden haben könnte. Allerdings erscheint es mir eher unwahrscheinlich, daß die Formel eine viel ältere kultische Vorgeschichte gehabt hätte, bevor sie ihrem jetzigen dtn Kontext

eingegliedert wurde. Das Bekenntnis drückt nämlich nur auf eine andere Weise das zentrale Anliegen des ersten Gebots aus: "die Bindung an den einzigen wahren Gott, die für Israel verpflichtend ist" (Loretz, 121). Damit fällt es inhaltlich mit dem Hauptgebot des Dtn zusammen, was dafür spricht, daß es innerhalb der dtn Bewegung entstanden ist, die die Alleinverehrung Jahwes zu ihrer Hauptforderung gemacht hatte und deshalb das *Sch'ma*^c an die Spitze ihres Reformprogramms stellte.

Auch wenn man kritisch zu der These des Vf.s steht, das *Sch'ma*^c sei einst eine kultische Aussage gewesen, die polemisch gegen Baals Königtum Stellung genommen habe, bleibt es ein unbestreitbares Verdienst des Vf.s, anhand der ugaritischen Parallele den ursprünglichen Sinn und die richtige Übersetzung des Hauptbekenntnisses Israels gesichert zu haben: "Jahwe ist unser Gott, Jahwe ist einzig".

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Novum Testamentum

Simon LÉGASSE, *L'évangile de Marc*. 2 tomes (Lectio divina — commentaires 5). Paris, Éditions du Cerf, 1997. 1047 p. 13,5 x 21,5. FF 500

The first thing to say about this commentary is that it is not so dauntingly long as its 1047 pages, packaged in two volumes, make it appear. A French translation of Mark's Greek text occupies some space, and the pages are relatively small, so that the total number of words runs to only two-thirds or three-quarters of Rudolf Pesch's commentary, also packaged in two volumes (*Das Markusevangelium* [HTKNT II/1 (2. Aufl.)-2; Freiburg, 1977]), and only half or so of my commentary in one volume (*Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* [Grand Rapids, 1993]). Though definitely historical critical and scholarly, then, Légasse's commentary should prove useful to a fairly wide audience.

Most of the commentary is taken up with exposition, pericope by pericope. Légasse devotes only 34 pages to introductory matters. Many valuable footnotes dot the exposition; and in addition to a select general bibliography, each pericope carries its own special bibliography. The footnotes contain numerous references to primary literature, both canonical and noncanonical, both Jewish and non-Jewish, as well as to secondary literature. The cited secondary literature represents an admirably wide range of modern languages; yet one can detect a tendency to cite secondary literature without discussion of its contents.

The exposition is strong on the flow of narrative in Mark, more especially on the structure of pericopes, and most especially on chiasm and concentricity, though without overdoing the last two. Form criticism creeps in now and again; but it is mainly presupposed, and synchrony — taking the text as it presently stands — rules the day. A modicum of textual criticism and brief word studies provide enrichment, and the commentary ends with a triple bonus in further commentaries on the long and short endings of Mark and on the Freer Logion.

Almost exclusively, Légasse takes dominant positions, often with little or no argument. For him, Mark wrote in Rome to support the faith of Christians there whom the recent Neronian persecution had put to the test. Mark himself was a Jewish Christian, probably John Mark from Jerusalem, but his audience consisted of Christians most of whom had had a pagan upbringing. On the one hand, his gospel belongs to the genre of biography, broadly conceived. On the other hand, it has distinctively Christian features — its setting forth Jesus as the "Homme-Dieu", for example — and lacks the characteristics of high literary style. Instead, Mark scabbled together originally isolated units of tradition and earlier small collections thereof, so that their present framework represents Mark's artificial construction. Since the pre-Markan units and collections had undergone considerable shaping during the course of circulation in the early church, the tradition preserved by Papias that Mark wrote down Peter's reminiscences falls by the wayside.

On matters of textual interpretation, too, Légasse usually takes dominant positions. Overall, Mark teaches that it is hard to be a Christian; but Christ himself had to suffer, and he is returning soon to deliver you from persecution. So keep the faith! Mark probably writes also in the vein of pastoral generosity toward Christians who had lapsed during the Neronian persecution.

Selectively and more particularly, Légasse regards all of 1,1-15 as prologue; 3,7-8,26 as unified by the motif of a boat on the lake; Peter's confession in 8,26 as a turning point; 8,27-10,52 as unified by three passion-and-resurrection predictions; and 11,1-11 as another turning point, this time into Passion Week. Yet more particularly, Légasse interprets Jesus' temptation in Mark as a restoration of paradise; the parable of the soils as encouraging Christians not to be discouraged by failures in their preaching, for Jesus' preaching, too, did not always succeed; the tempest-battered disciples and their lack of faith as symbolizing Mark's persecuted community and their lack of faith in Jesus' concern and soon-coming deliverance of them; the exorcism of Legion from the demoniac of Gerasa as prefiguring the expansion of evangelism to Gentiles; the feeding of the 5000 as symbolic of the Eucharist; the road to Jerusalem from Peter's confession onward as symbolizing the way of the cross for disciples; the Transfiguration as a foretaste of the Parousia; the fruitless fig tree as symbolizing Israel; 12,35-37 as toning down the Messiah's Davidic sonship in favor of divine lordship; 13,7-8.14-20.24-27 as stemming from a pre-Markan apocalyptic message first spoken by a Jewish Christian prophet in Judea (but not against the background of the incident concerning Caligula); Jesus' wakeful praying in Gethsemane as a model for Christian vigilance and recourse to God in times of temptation; the disciples' sleeping in Gethsemane as a warning that Christians ought to watch for Christ's coming; the story of Jesus' betrayal by Judas Iscariot as warning Christians not to join the camp of their persecutors; the story of Peter's denials as a somewhat similar warning, but his tears, plus the mention of him in 16,7 (cf. 14,28), as indicative of pardon and restoration; Simon of Cyrene as representative of cross-taking disciples (despite some fundamental differences from 8,34, which Légasse himself notes); the women's watching Jesus' crucifixion from afar, and similar fear at the empty tomb, as representing deficiency in discipleship and faith, though nothing so bad as that of the male disciples, who had fled; 16,1-8 as having had an apologetic origin separate from the passion account; and 16,8 as marking the original end of this gospel.

More debated but still belonging to mainstream opinion are other positions taken by Légasse such as that the mixture of positive and negative traits in the disciples represents a like mixture in Mark's Roman Christian community, especially as persecution has exposed such traits, there being no vendetta in Mark against the Christian community in Jerusalem as represented by the disciples. Mark 1,1 gives the whole gospel a title. Mark does not portray the biological family of Jesus as Jesus' enemies. Mark 4,10-12 is not strictly predestinarian; rather, expressive of God's judgmental response to those who have refused to meet the demands of Jesus' message, as per the first three kinds of soil in the associated parable of soils. The leaven of the Pharisees warns Christians against unbelieving Jews, and the

leaven of Herod against Roman persecutors. The three passion-and-resurrection predictions are Christianized in Mark but go back to a single prediction in which Jesus foresaw his violent end after the pattern of earlier prophets' similar end. The prediction in 9,1, fulfilled according to Mark by the Transfiguration, came originally from a Palestinian Jewish Christian prophet, not from the historical Jesus. Despite allusions to Exod 24, the motif of metamorphosis points to a hellenistic origin for the story of his transfiguration. The command to call Bartimaeus prefigures the Christian missionary work of mediating the gospel to people. Though Jesus does not call Bartimaeus (quite the opposite, in fact), Bartimaeus's following Jesus symbolizes Christians' attainment of resurrection by way of the cross. "This mountain" originally referred to a mountain in Galilee, not in Judea. The passion narrative contains some pre-Markan groupings of material, some pre-Markan additions to these, and some pre-Markan as well as Marcan redaction. The Word of Institution over the cup came from ex-pagan Christians, not from the historical Jesus, so that the Word of Institution over the bread, though authentic, did not originally refer to an aspect of his physical reality distinct from his blood. The episode in Gethsemane does not derive from two traditions. The young man who fled naked stands for Christians who out of cowardice try to escape persecution and thus expose themselves to the assaults of evil. The divine surrogates, "the Blessed One" and "the Power", have no parallels in Hebrew and Aramaic literature and therefore resulted from awkward attempts to sound Jewish. Historically, Jews offered Jesus myrrhed wine but anti-Jewish sentiment shifted the kind gesture to Romans.

But Légasse takes a few less popular positions, too. Whereas many think that Mark corrects a theology of glory, as represented by the traditions of Jesus' miracles, exorcisms, didactic authority, prescience, and such like by encasing that theology in the framework of Jesus' passion, Légasse treats these traditions as positive encouragements to Mark's persecuted audience. Justifiably in my view but against a fair amount of opinion to the contrary, Légasse denies that Mark systematically imposes a messianic secret on Jesus' ministry; for there are too many differences between the passages cited for secrecy. The original of 1,1 did not include "Son of God". In 1,41, "feeling compassion" may correct an earlier gloss in "becoming angry", the original having had neither. The giver of a cup of water (9,41) is a non-Christian whose generosity to a Christian will not go unrewarded at the Last Judgment. Jesus did not curse the fruitless fig tree; he only sterilized it. The story of the widow's mite portrays her as a victim of corruption in the Temple-system, and condemns that system. Chapter 13 teaches that for Christians, tribulational events will signal the nearness of the Parousia but that God's shortening of the tribulation will make exact calculation impossible. The initial charge brought against Jesus during his trial was false insofar as it had to do with the Temple-building, but true in the sense that his sacrificial death replaced the Temple-cult. Likewise, the rending of the veil of the Temple illustrates the end of that cult at the moment of Jesus' death rather than portending a destruction of the Temple-building forty years later.

As is already evident, however, Légasse is nothing if not cautious. By

and large, he keeps to the middle of the road. For those who like their commentaries informative of common opinion, this one fills the bill with grace and aplomb. It will likely become a standard for users of French, a replacement of Lagrange — no small compliment. But for those who want a commentary to show some flashes of originality, to mole around the foundations, to challenge entrenched positions, or to shore up those positions with new evidence and argumentation, this commentary will not suffice. Most of its contents are old hat by the standards of today's fast-paced developments in biblical scholarship, and not only old hat but also oblivious in a number of instances to previously published critiques of the positions Légasse has taken as well as to new positions staked out by other scholars prior to the publication of his commentary.

For example, though listing studies that argue against a pre-Markan collection of controversy stories in 2,1-3,6, Légasse assumes such a collection without counterargument; nor does he take up various reductions of the collection in other studies. His presenting the Marcan miracles, exorcisms, etc., as encouraging fails to deal with the opposing argument that it was the very theology of glory represented in these materials which, through cognitive dissonance, had discouraged Mark's persecuted audience and required correction by placement in the framework of Jesus' passion. Nor does Légasse's presentation of these same materials as positive lead him to question, as I think it ought, whether Mark did in fact write his gospel to encourage persecuted Christians. Légasse does not consider the possibility of Mark's having written it for use in Christian evangelism, the theology of glory and power being designed to erase the shame of Jesus' crucifixion and enhance his reputation.

Perceptively, Légasse notes in Mark's latter half the extraordinary prescience of Jesus but lacks the acuity to see how that prescience fits the purpose of apologetic evangelism better than it fits the purpose of pastoral encouragement. Nor does it dawn on Légasse that Mark's ticking off the manifold fulfilments of Jesus' predictions calls in question — on internal grounds — an ending at 16,8. For then Mark would have ended without a narration of the most startling fulfilment of all, viz., Jesus' preceding the disciples to Galilee and their seeing him there ("just as he told you", the angelic young man at the empty tomb emphasizes). Both Matt 28,16-20 and John 21,1-23 support the availability to Mark of such a story (see also 1 Cor 15,5-7).

Légasse treats 15,42-45 as proving the reality of Jesus' death and thereby misses another evangelistically apologetic point, which is not that Jesus had "really" died but that he had died "already" (*ēdē*), "a while back" (*palai*), so that his hanging on a cross was minimal, only six hours rather than the usual several days (15,25.33-34), as well as followed by a respectful burial rather than the shameful kind usually given to victims of crucifixion. Jesus' loud outcry in 15,37 is assumed to have been inarticulate and different from the Cry of Dereliction, also loud, rather than identical with it, whereas a second reference to it would double Mark's emphasis on the superhuman strength of Jesus as exhibited in one and the same last outcry. And discussions that argue for dating the Papiian tradition c. A.D. 110 seem to have eluded Légasse's notice; he simply repeats the old dating

of A.D. 120-130 and takes no account of Papias's own further dating of the tradition earlier than himself. As a result, the possibility that Mark does indeed enshrine Petrine tradition does not receive the serious consideration it should.

In connection with a work of so large a scope as Légasse's commentary, criticisms, including others of the aforementioned more or less popular positions, could go on and on. It would be churlish to let them do so, however (though the misparsing of *ēggiken* as aorist rather than perfect on p. 104 should not pass uncorrected). I close this review, therefore, by expressing a wish that Légasse had interacted with my own commentary on Mark, listed by him but otherwise neglected. For precisely because of many disagreements, both large and small, my thinking would have profited greatly from that of a scholar so capable as he is. By no means do I stand alone in this regard. Others, too, will be the poorer for not having received attention. But no longer can anyone canvass the whole of literature on Mark; so whatever the agreements and disagreements, whatever the notice or neglect, all readers must be more appreciative than critical of Légasse's labors.

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Jeffrey T. REED, *A Discourse Analysis of Philippians*. Method and Rhetoric in the Debate over Literary Integrity (JSNTSS 136). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1997. 525p. 16 x 24. Cloth: £55.00 - \$80.00

This book is a significant addition to the growing corpus of detailed studies on Philippians. The first linguistically-oriented work on Philippians was that of W. Schenk, *Die Philipperbriefe des Paulus* (Stuttgart 1984). Since then quite a number of developments have taken place in this field, one of these being refining methods to study stretches of language beyond the confines of mere sentences (textlinguistics, discourse analysis). Reed cashes in on these developments and adds also his own contribution towards making them applicable to biblical texts. His work is definitely the most thorough linguistically-based analysis of Philippians which has appeared to date.

For a meaningful discussion of this work it would be helpful first to identify the main objectives which have been pursued. I shall keep to the more salient ones, the most important of which are formulated by the author himself (see especially 403-406):

1. As basis and point of departure, the presentation and development of a general framework for a linguistically sound, systemic-functional grammar, and, more specifically, a model of discourse analysis applicable to the New Testament were envisaged. Philippians was targeted as test-case for this experiment.

2. At the same time it was hoped that this endeavour would contribute towards convincing the broader scholarly community of the usefulness of linguistics and relevant disciplines for the study of New Testament texts.

3. One of the most important issues, and the one which gave this study its special focus, was the vexing and much-debated question of the integrity of Philippians. Should it be read as an original single-letter or as a multiple-letter text?

4. A somewhat subsidiary, but nevertheless exceedingly important aim was to give attention to the question whether Philippians, and for that matter also the other Pauline letters, should be understood primarily from the canons of epistolography or from rhetorical convention. As is wellknown, this is one of the most burning current issues in Pauline studies.

The first two chapters of the book present the profile and main constituents of a discourse analysis applicable to New Testament texts. In this regard the author leaned heavily on the systemicfunctional theories attributed mainly to M.A. K. Halliday. Chapters 3-6 apply this model to Philippians, focussing on the question of its integrity. Chapter 3 introduces the debate. Chapter 4 deals with what the author formulates as the 'structure' of Philippians, concretely transforming it into a genre analysis. Chapter 5 concentrates on the 'texture' of Philippians. The text of Philippians is analysed on the micro-structural level, but with a view to its cohesiveness as a whole. This is done on the basis of Halliday's distinction between ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings. Chapter 6 draws the conclusions.

To what extent did the author succeed in realizing his objectives? The first and second of these, as formulated above, can conveniently be discussed together. In my opinion Reed succeeded in developing an impressive and linguistically well-accounted model for discourse analysis. The question is whether he has succeeded in presenting his model in such a way that the broader community of New Testament scholars would be sold on it. I am afraid that the answer must be in the negative. To appreciate a method one first has to understand it. And though the author was definitely conscious of this problem (see 7, 16-24) and tried to accommodate his readers, it is doubtful whether many New Testament scholars — perhaps only those with a solid linguistic background — will display the perseverance to struggle through the thicket of technical terms, thus enabling themselves to evaluate the author's results on merit. In order to avoid the impression of idiocentricity and parochialism, linguistic insights and contributions will have to be popularized even to a much greater extent.

With regards to his methodology, it should be asked whether his separation of 'structure' and 'texture' is really convincing. The term 'structure', as understood generally, would certainly include what Reed calls 'texture'. Significantly, he narrowed his chapter on the structure of Philippians down to an analysis of its genre and genre constituents. To interpret structure analysis as merely genre analysis is not convincing, despite the fact that I find his genre analysis as such excellent (*vide infra*). Genre study should certainly form part of an analysis of structure, but so

should in my opinion also the search for cohesive chains and chain interaction.

Reed sharply criticizes Schenk's division of textlinguistics into syntax, semantics and pragmatics. I do not wish to plead for this scheme as such. It should, however, be said that although this kind of approach may not currently be in vogue, it definitely contains an inherent logic and could allow for an integrated approach, as long as an insensitive compartmentalization is avoided.

The third objective identified above was to address the problem of the integrity of Philippians. The sensitive and well-balanced way in which Reed treated this issue should be applauded. He is very conscious of the problem of circular argumentation and weighs arguments and counter-arguments carefully. The conclusion he derives from his extensive discourse analysis is that the macrostructural cohesiveness of the text definitely allows for a single-letter reading. He concedes, however, that there may be strong arguments for a two-letter reading, but not for a combination of three letters. Only once he seems to have been slightly off-guard. Judging from the drift of his previous presentation, the statement on page 408 that the results of his analyses 'firmly supported a single-letter reading' sounds somewhat optimistic. Also, his strong argument for the plausibility of a two-letter hypothesis defeats the tenor of this statement. The basic problem with the argument of cohesiveness — and Reed himself readily concedes this (406) — is that a stylistically and theologically sensitive redactor could have merged two or more distinct texts into a unified and even cohesive discourse.

In the argument about the textual integrity of Philippians, the awkward transition in 3,1 to the section against the adversaries, especially the wording τὰ αὐτὰ γράφειν ὑμῖν ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐκ ὀκνηρόν, ὑμῖν δὲ ἀσφαλές, has played an important role. Reed's important suggestion that this transition should be understood as a 'hesitation formula' is very interesting and would certainly make a unified reading of Philippians somewhat easier. He advances numerous examples of the use of a hesitation formula in other Hellenistic letters, all of them using either the verb ὀκνέω or the adverb ἀνόκνως. It would certainly strengthen his argument if we could also find examples of οὐκ ὀκνηρόν used in this way. Perhaps we should not be rigid in this regard, but even then the annoying counterargument would be that the use of the hesitation formula here would rather have been the brain-product of a redactor, firstly because even the supposed hesitation formula does not fully smooth out the awkwardness of the transition, and secondly because Paul does not apply this formula elsewhere. That being the case, even a hesitation formula could be turned into an argument for a multiple-letter position. To conclude: Reed's work presents perhaps the best attempt to date to make a single-letter understanding of Philippians possible. He has, it seems, not succeeded in advancing this possibility to a probability. What he has proven beyond doubt is that, even with the best in formation and the most sophisticated methodology presently at our disposal, a final decision on the original integrity or non-integrity of Philippians is impossible. The question arises whether it is really worth the effort to pursue this issue further. Arguments on both sides hold the balance

and in the end it is the individual 'gut-feeling' of the scholar which tip the scale one way or the other.

Although being somewhat subsidiary, the fourth objective was in my opinion brilliantly realized. Against what nowadays seems to be almost an axiom with scholars working within the rhetorical paradigm, Reed succeeded in showing convincingly that the Pauline literature should first and foremost be understood from the conventions of ancient epistolography and not from the canons of the rhetorical handbooks. This he did, on the one hand, by highlighting the numerous points of correlation between the Pauline letters and the conventions of ancient Hellenistic epistolography, on the other by indicating in a well-documented appendix that GraecoRoman rhetoricians, epistolary theorists and the writers of various kinds of letters all regarded rhetoric and letter-writing as two distinctly different fields. This is not to deny that rhetoric influenced New Testament literature and that many strategies and devices found in rhetorical handbooks could also be identified in these texts. There could, however, be something else at work here (see also Reed's suggestion on 161). It would certainly be worthwhile to investigate whether rhetorical and epistolographical practices did not both make positive use of universal rules emanating from psychological and social factors determining *all* successful and effective human communication. Why, for instance, is creating a positive ethos for himself common to speakers and writers of every imaginable genre of human communication? Would the existence of such universal rules explain why letter-writers readily borrowed certain rhetorical devices? Or did they perhaps apply them independently, subconsciously activating these universal rules?

In the previous paragraph, part of the contents of chapter 4 has already been mentioned. The majority of New Testament scholars will find this chapter the most instructive in the whole book. Reed not only shows himself to be thoroughly acquainted with the *status quaestionis* regarding epistolographical research and its bearing on the Pauline letters, he also enriches it, time and again illustrating his point by making extensive use of the abundant corpus of material available from Hellenistic letters. I find his description of Philippians as a hortatory personal letter entirely convincing and also his conviction that this can explain its multi-thematic character. He quite correctly criticizes attempts to squeeze its contents together under an artificial, unifying macrostructural theme.

The way in which Reed uses the term hermeneutic deserves some attention. He repeatedly applies it to discourse analysis, designating the latter as a hermeneutic. A typical statement in this regard would be: 'discourse analysis as a New Testament hermeneutic' (403; cf. 7, 8, 21, 58, 402). To use the term 'hermeneutic' in this way — and Reed does not stand alone in this — is to confuse hermeneutic as theory of understanding with a specific analytical method. It would be wise to distinguish clearly between hermeneutic as such and various concrete exegetical tools, including discourse analysis.

Some minor details should receive attention in the instance of a reprint. In Reed's interpretation of the position of Lohmeyr (181, n. 109), the word 'former' should be replaced by 'latter'. On page 330 the reference to

Philippians 2,7 should in both instances be replaced by 2,23. In the table presented on page 358, the first two entries under the heading 4,10-23 are out of place. And finally some mistakes slipped into the Greek text of Appendix A (see 1,7c.8b.28c; 4,8c.10d). However, this does not detract anything from the accurate and attractive presentation of this work.

In conclusion it should be stated that Reed's work contains such a wealth of sound exegetical observations and sharp insights drawn from his linguistic background that it will not be feasible to discuss them here. It must suffice to state that, in spite of its difficult reading, this work deserves to be taken seriously.

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G.W. PETERMAN, *Paul's Gift from Philippi*. Conventions of Gift Exchange and Christian Giving (SNTS Monograph Series 92). Cambridge, University Press, 1997. VIII-246 p. 14,5 x 22,5. Hardback: £35.00 - \$54.95

This published version of the author's dissertation (King's College, London, 1992, under Graham Stanton) is a welcome contribution both to a better understanding of the role of 4,10-20 in Paul's letter to the Philippians as well as to a specific aspect of the socio-historical background of the New Testament in general. In particular the author has demonstrated: (1) that Paul's use of *ἐκοινωνήσεν εἰς λόγον δόσεως καὶ λήψεως* in Phil 4,15, although terminology drawn from commerce, reflects the earlier co-opting of this language as a social metaphor to refer to the giving and receiving of benefits within the context of friendship; (2) that Paul's failure to give verbal thanks in this passage, which has distressed so many within Western cultures (sometimes calling it "thankless thanks"), also reflects this social convention; friends tended to avoid verbal thanks since it often suggested "solicitation for further benefits" (196); and (3) that even though Paul is reflecting a well-known social convention, as with almost everything else Paul does, his passion for the gospel transforms the convention at some key points (turning over his obligation of reciprocity to God, 4,18-19, thus lessening the impact of "obligation" as such). Indirectly, the study also serves with other recent studies (e.g., D. Garland, "The Composition and Unity of Philippians. Some Neglected Literary Factors", *NT* 27 [1985] 141-173) to affirm the unity of the letter as we have received it.

To arrive at these conclusions, Peterman first (chaps. 2 and 3) gathers and comments on most of the significant texts from Paul's Jewish background (both canonical and extra-canonical) and, far more importantly, from Greco-Roman sources (the more significant of those from Seneca are also placed in Appendix A). After an analysis of "partnership in Philippians 1-2" (chap. 4), he applies all of this to the primary text of Phil 4,10-20 (chap. 5), and concludes by looking at "giving and receiving elsewhere in

Paul's letters" (chap. 6), showing how these are related to, and support, his primary conclusions about Phil 4,10-20. Two further appendixes (B and C) gather the more significant primary texts showing other uses of "giving and receiving" language, and examine "the support of wandering preachers and philosophers". Unfortunately, the published version carries all the accoutrements of "dissertationese", which tends to detract from the pleasure of reading. Nonetheless, the very methodical plowing through the material as here presented will serve the academy well in terms of the availability and significance of the data.

While Peterman's primary thesis seems well established, it could have been strengthened at a couple of points, and a few other matters are less convincing. In particular, the value of the study could have been improved considerably by his pursuing at some length the substantial relationship between the giving and receiving of benefits and the matter of Greco-Roman "friendship" (as e.g., in S.K. Stowers, "Friends and Enemies in the Politics of Heaven: Reading Theology in Philippians", *Pauline Theology*, Vol. 1 [ed. J. M. Basslerd] [Minneapolis 1991] 105-121; and L.M. White, "Morality between Two Worlds: A Paradigm of Friendship in Philippians," *Greeks, Romans and Christians* [ed. D.L. Balch et al.] [Minneapolis 1990] 201-215). Although Peterman regularly mentions this relationship — and properly critiques White and Stowers for overdoing the social conventions at the expense of Paul's passion for the gospel — his failure both to explicate the nature of Greco-Roman friendship and to establish the significance of "friendship" in Paul's relationship with the Philippians becomes a major weakness in this otherwise excellent study.

At the same time, it would also have been useful for Peterman to have established the relationship between the conventions of friendship and Greco-Roman epistolary conventions (especially letters of friendship and moral exhortation). At issue here is the fact that the author regularly uses language that recognizes the differences between the "friendship of equals" and that predicated on a patronal (e.g., teacher-student, parent-child) relationship; nonetheless, in the end he suggests a more patronal relationship exists between Paul and the Philippians than one can demonstrate from the data of Philippians. That Paul's "being the receiver has not usurped his position of apostolic authority" (198) is certainly true, but is also just as certainly a non-issue in this letter; indeed, Paul seems to bend over backwards not to make it one. The key to this lies with the larger question of "friendship", of which "social reciprocity" is but part.

All kinds of data within Philippians indicate both a friendship of equals between Paul and this community of faith and a letter that displays many of these conventions, of which social reciprocity is but a part (the "presence/absence" motif [1,24-26.27; 2,12.19-24]; the expressions of personal affection [1,8; 4,1]; concern over each other's "affairs" [τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν/τὰ περὶ ἐμέ, 2,19.23; cf. 1,12.27]; the apparently deliberate avoidance of mentioning his authority; the use of exemplary paradigms to support his exhortations; that "friendship" assumed common enemies [a matter Peterman seems to misread, 117]). What is important for Peterman's thesis is that, despite some texts in Seneca suggesting that friendship is founded on the giving of benefits, the evidence from the discussions of friendship

in the primary sources, and thus of Seneca's *de Beneficiis* as well, indicates that "social reciprocity" is a subset of the larger category of friendship, rather than the other way about.

Peterman's apparent misreading of the "agonistic" nature of friendship probably also leads in part to his not dealing with Phil 3,1-4,9 in this study, despite his insistence on the unity of the letter. This passage, however, makes perfectly good sense in the context of "friends having enemies in common".

Failure to analyze the nature of friendship itself also weakens some of the author's conclusions as to the difference between Paul's relationship with this church and with that in Corinth. While his own conclusion, that it reflects a difference between whether Paul is present or absent, is full of interesting and helpful insights, it seems to miss the clear relational difference that stands at the heart of things. It is probably of no small significance that Paul uses the parental metaphor in his correspondence with Corinth, but does not so much as hint at it in this letter. This means that we should probably understand Paul's and his co-worker's acceptance of hospitality from Lydia as a matter of accepting patronage from her (contra Peterman, 150-151). This a benefit received because of the one given (the gospel that saved her and her household), helped to establish the longterm friendship of equals with this church, which included the continuing exchange of benefits.

On other matters, Peterman's analysis of Philemon as exhibiting the same kind of "obligation" based on social reciprocity, nuanced considerably by the gospel, should offer a helpful corrective to some ways that letter has been read. On the other hand, it seems less likely that Paul's modification of reciprocity toward the gospel, with God as the ultimate benefactor of all, is influenced by the Old Testament texts on reciprocity themselves, as Peterman suggests (199), than that it is by Paul's basic theology and the impact of the gospel on his life. Moreover, Peterman's rehearsal of O'Brien's arguments (*Commentary on Philippians* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids 1991]), plus some additional ones of his own (93-98), that $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\ \delta\upsilon\mu\acute{\omega}\nu$ in Phil 1,3 is to be understood as a subjective genitive ("your remembrance [of me]") remains unconvincing. What they have failed to produce is an example of $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\epsilon}\alpha$ with a pronoun that is used as subject; and if it is subjective, then one should have expected an expressed object. Otherwise the subject of the sentence ("I give thanks") serves as the unexpressed subject of the remembrance and the genitive as the object. But this perhaps tends to border on a quibble (as does noting that $\phi\rho\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ occurs ten times in Philippians, not nine 230 n. 58]).

What needs to be reiterated is that Peterman, despite failure to explicate the nature and significance of Greco-Roman friendship, has produced a very important study to help us to understand both Paul's relationships with this church and the meaning and significance of 4,10-20. We are all in his debt (in the sense of Western culture, not that of Greco-Roman social reciprocity!).

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